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Observer Views Strategic Arms Reduction Talks

LD2301204191 Moscow World Service in English 1810 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Text] Soviet-American talks are under way in Washington to put the final touch to the agreement on reducing strategic offensive weapons. The treaty is to be signed at the Moscow summit which is planned to be held from 11-13 next month. Here is what a military observer of Radio Moscow, Colonel Vadim Solovyev, says:

The two sides have agreed that the number of nuclear warheads would not exceed 6,000 and the number of delivery vehicles no more than 1,600 and that includes intercontinental ballistic missiles, strategic aviation and strategic naval units. Along with the signing of the agreement on strategic offensive weapons it is planned to make a politically binding statement so as to keep the number of cruise missiles at a certain level. The Soviet Union pledges to reduce its heavy intercontinental ballistic missiles by half in the course of seven years and such a step, to my mind, is very indicative since the United States has no similar strategic weapons. In other words, the agreement on strategic offensive weapons would sharply reduce the threat of a nuclear holocaust. But now when so little time is left until the planned meeting in Moscow certain experts express doubts over the treaty being ready. Some of them predict that it would not be signed. Here is the opinion of Major General Vladimir Kuklev of the General Staff of the Soviet Union's Armed Forces:

There is no reason to say that the treaty will not be ready on time, says Major General Vladimir Kuklev. Of course, there still are some unsettled problems, mainly technical ones, connected with certain aspects of control. The agreement provides for many on-the-spot inspections and even permanent inspections. This implies constant supervision over the production of mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles. There will be such supervision at two facilities in the Soviet Union, and at two in the United States. There is a principled agreement on that score. And now a common approach is to be worked out on less significant technical details. So, I'm quite sure that the agreement can be finalized on time. I've taken part in many different negotiations and can view the situation as a specialist. There are no questions that could be the cause for torpedoing the agreement. Such is the opinion of Major General Vladimir Kuklev of the Soviet Union's General Staff.

Churkin on Soviet Nationals Leaving Iraq

PM2401202791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Jan 91 Union Edition p 6

[G. Charodeyev report: "Soviet Diplomats Still in Iraqi Capital"]

[Text] At a briefing for Soviet and foreign journalists Vitaliy Churkin, chief of the USSR Foreign Ministry Information Administration, said in reply to an IZVESTIYA question:

"The attitude taken to the war by Soviet citizens working under contract in Iraq has changed sharply. As is well known, there were approximately 150 of our specialists there as of 10 January. At the time they voluntarily expressed a desire to continue working at Soviet-Iraqi economic cooperation projects. I can only assume that these people were hoping that there would be no military conflict.

"As of today all Soviet specialists have left Iraq. It is expected that the last group will arrive in Moscow 24 January on an Aeroflot flight out of Tehran. Thus, there are currently 41 Soviet citizens in Iraq—all of them staffers at the Soviet Embassy in Baghdad. There are no other Soviet citizens anywhere in the country. According to the information we are getting, our diplomats feel fine and have no complaints..."

U.S., European Reaction to Baltic Events Cited

PM2401141791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 91 First Edition p 1

[TASS reports from Washington, Strasbourg, and London: "The Baltic Angle"]

[Text] Washington, 23 Jan—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has stated that in the light of recent events in the Baltic the "great progress" made in relations between the United States and the USSR could be placed in jeopardy. At the same time he noted the need to develop Soviet-U.S. relations further and the importance of "achieving progress on arms control questions."

Baker was answering journalists' questions on the meetings he had Tuesday [22 January] with representatives of the three Baltic republics who were here on a private visit. "As far as highest-level Soviet-U.S. meetings are concerned," the secretary of state said, "we shall discuss this problem both within the administration and in negotiations with the Soviet Union."

American newspapers have given considerable attention to yesterday's statement by USSR President M.S. Gorbachev. "Mikhail Gorbachev has given an assurance that the policy of reforms and perestroyka remain unchanged," THE WASHINGTON POST writes. On this score THE NEW YORK TIMES points out: "President Gorbachev has announced that the confrontation in the Baltic republics does not signal a change in his policy, and he has rejected the charge that he has deviated from his reforming course." As ABC television noted, the USSR president "promised on the one hand to put an end to the chaos in the Baltic, and on the other to hold the military subunits in check."

Strasbourg (Bas-Rhin Department), 23 Jan—In a speech today to European Parliament deputies, Italian Council of Ministers Chairman Giulio Andreotti stated that the European Community is following the development of events in the Baltic with alarm.

In his opinion the EC should adopt a responsible position which could prompt the Soviet authorities to open a dialogue with Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and to renounce the use of force in resolving the problems that have come to a head there, which would conform both with the spirit and the letter of the Paris Charter adopted at the last CSCE conference.

London, 23 Jan—According to a report by the BBC's Moscow correspondent, "the USSR president has not yielded to calls from hard-liners to introduce direct presidential rule in the Baltic republics.

"However, he has not gone as far as directly condemning the actions of the army. He will have to act decisively and prevent any subsequent use of force if he wants to give the lie to the threatened emergence of a dictatorship in the country."

'World This Week' Analyzes Persian Gulf War

LD2001232191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 20 GMT 20 Jan 91

["The World This Week" program presented by Valentin Gubernatorov, All-Union Radio foreign affairs commentator, with TASS political observers Aleksandr Antsiferov and Yuriy Tyssovskiy]

[Text] [Gubernatorov] Good day, esteemed comrades. We are beginning our Sunday program entitled: The World This Week. At the microphone is the presenter of the program, Valentin Gubernatorov, foreign affairs commentator for All-Union Radio. With me in the studio today are Aleksandr Antsiferov and Yuriy Tyssovskiy, both political observers for TASS.

Although the program is called The World This Week, the main events of the past week has, of course, been the outbreak of war in the Persian Gulf, an event which has pushed other events firmly into the background. Therefore, I think we will devote our program to this problem.

Ever since 17 January we have been tensely following the events in the Persian Gulf where the United States and its allies have begun combat operations against Iraq. On the same night as the war against Iraq began, President Bush addressed the American people. I think we should quote a few statements from this nationwide address. Five months ago, the U.S. President said, Saddam Husayn began a brutal war against Kuwait. Our military operations were undertaken in accordance with a UN resolution and with the consent of the U.S. Congress. They were launched after long months of constant and virtually continuous diplomatic endeavors on the part of the United Nations and other countries. Arab leaders sought a so-called Arab solution, but they also came to the conclusion that Saddam Husayn does not wish to withdraw from Kuwait. Our aims are clear, the U.S. President continued. Saddam Husayn's forces will leave Kuwait. Its lawful government will be restored. Kuwait will be liberated. Ultimately, Iraq will comply with all the resolutions which the United Nations has adopted on this subject.

I hope, the President also noted in his address, that the fighting will not last long and that the losses will be kept to the absolute minimium. In my view, what one may describe as a historic moment has truly been reached now. Last year we achieved enormous progress in bringing an end to the protracted era of conflict and the Cold War. The opportunity to build, both for ourselves and for the future generations, a new world based on law and order rather than the law of the jungle has opened up before us. It can also be said that we now have a real chance to build a new world order, an order in which the United Nations will be able to use its peace-making role in order to fulfill the promise and justify the prospects and hopes conceived by the founders of this organization.

I also wish to draw our listeners' attention to the President's remark that the fighting will not last a long time. Only five days has passed since the hostilities began in the Persian Gulf. I think one can already draw the conclusion that, for the allied forces, the war will in fact be more difficult than had been expected. Although the forecasts that the allies would quickly win air superiority have on the whole turned out to be true, operations on the ground will evidently not be so fast-moving and successful as had been planned.

What else would I like to draw attention to? You know, I am still amazed by the actions of Saddam Husayn who, for the sake of his political and economic ambitions, for the sake of going down in history as a strong personality in the Arab World, has gambled with the lives not only of his fellow countrymen and other Arabs, but also with those of people living far from this region. Yes, there have been heroes who fought for a just cause. One need only think of Garibaldi. Mankind can only be proud of such a representative. But Saddam Husayn has committed aggression against another country. The entire world community has condemned him and demanded that the Iraqi regime withdraw its forces from Kuwait. But, as they say, Saddam Husayn did not bat an eyelid. Is he really in his right mind? What is he hoping to achieve? What is your view?

[Tyssovskiy] The personality of Saddam Husayn cannot be viewed in isolation from the general political situation in the Arab World, or even the Muslim world. In my view, the point is that the Arabs prefer at the present time, after the disappointments they have suffered in the political field ever since the creation of the State of Israel, to live more in the past without even thinking about the present, let alone the future. As you know, in the Arab world the past is viewed with special significance. In the past, the Arab Caliphates were a mighty force controlling virtually half the world. Now, however, everything looks exceptionally gloomy against that background. The first wave of nationalism during the 1960's plainly subsided. Now we are observing something like a second wave of Arab nationalism. In this respect, Saddam Husayn naturally represents a figure of exceptional interest. I will not dwell on his personal qualities; they are fairly unseemly. At the same time, one cannot deny the fact that he is an oustanding individual. Since he came to power, he has succeeded in creating out of Iraq a kind of mini superpower in the Near East. He is a man who stands out for his toughness and brutality, who does everything possible to achieve his objectives, without batting an eyelid. This is a very dangerous characteristic in a political leader.

Saddam Husayn is not a military man. In spite of this, it is he who has the last word in planning and carrying out various military operations, as was the case during the Iran-Iraq war which, as you know, lasted for an extremely long time. As a result of this war Iraq lost about 100,000 men. In fact, the figure was even higher. This is just the number killed. Iran also suffered very greatly as a result of that war. From the military point of view, I would not say that Husayn is an outstanding general. He is a brilliant tactician—political tactician, I stress-but in my view he is a fairly weak strategist.

What can one say here? You know from the example of that selfsame Iran-Iraq war, which was unquestionably initiated by Saddam Husayn, that its course during the first few months gave grounds to think that it would end in success for Iraq. The subsequent development of events, however, was completely unexpected. As a result, the war ended in a kind of stalemate in which neither side could defeat the other.

Husayn is also extremely flexible—when he has to be, I stress. When the acute situation was created in the Persian Gulf as a result of the occupation of Kuwait, Husayn did everything possible to make sure that his Iranian front was peaceful. He abandoned all the demands for which he had gone to war. He did this without even batting an eyelid, as you put it, without paying any attention to the feelings of the Iraqi people. So could one have expected flexibility from Husayn, and can it be expected from him now? I do not think so. He is striving to reconstitute himself as a Saladin—the renowned Sultan Salah al-Din who expelled the crusaders from Jerusalem. Even earlier he had appealed to elements of nationalism, for example during the Iran-Iraq war when he proclaimed this war to be the Al-Qadisiyah, in other words he named it after the city near which Arab warriors inflicted a crushing defeat on Iranian hordes at an early period in the development of Islam.

Saddam Husayn's personality has very many sides to it. I think he will hold out to the end. His aim is to convince not only the Arab and Muslim world, but world opinion as a whole, that despite its sufferings Iraq can endure this war and emerge from it as a kind of victor, although such an assumption is of course very dubious.

[Antsiferov] I will interrupt you here, Yuriy Konstantinovich, since I do not wholly agree with your assessment of the state of affairs in the present-day Arab world. What Arab world are we talking about? There is, for example, Saudi Arabia. This is a state with quite a high degree of civilized development, at least as far as technological development is concerned. There is also for instance Sudan, which lives according to the laws of a feudal society. Therefore, I think that in this case it is not quite right to generalize and portray the Arab world as some kind of single entity, or to draw all kinds of historical parallels.

This also applies to those references to Salah al-Din. At the end of the day, Saddam Husayn, although he is leading his army, is waging war against 28 allied states. He is now confronting this number of states which have joined the anti-Iraqi coalition. Ultimately it is not Saddam Husayn but the Iraqi army which is facing up to them. Much will depend not on the qualities which Saddam Husayn personally possesses, but on the extent to which the Iraqi army is capable of fighting. Much will depend on the extent to which the Iraqi people are prepared to stand and support the slogans which Saddanm Husayn proclaimed as he condemned both his people and his army to be victims, to all intents and purposes, in this conflict. Judging by what we are now seeing and by the latest reports from the theater of military operations, the allied military operations are proceeding highly successfully. They have suffered some losses, although their losses are minimal. Obviously these losses will continue. After all, the Iraqi army's ability to fight has not yet been destroyed. Nevertheless, it seems to me that the losses among the civilian population of Iraq and the losses in the Iraqi army are incomparably greater.

[Tyssovskiy] Unfortunately, I cannot agree with you. First and foremost, I have been dealing with the problems of the Islamic world for three and a half decades. I have personally visited many countries of this world, including Arab and non-Arab ones. A number of countries—the ones that you have mentioned, namely Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, and a number of others—have indeed achieved significant progress in the economic, technological, and other fields. I have to point out straightaway, however, that this progress was taken from other people; it is not their own achievement. It is progress purchased with money. These are the only exceptions.

[Antsiferov] But it is progress all the same.

[Tyssovskiy] It is progress, but progress attained by a very limited number of oil-rich states.

[Antsiferov] Not all that limited. You yourself have already listed about five or six.

[Tyssovskiy] That is quite correct, but if you compare them to the dozens of states in the Muslim world, the developed ones are entirely confined to the Arabian Peninsula. Even there not all the states have achieved this level of development. Fact remains fact. Unfortunately, the Muslim world is at a very, very low level of development in all respects. As far as the nature of war is concerned, a country which has been deprived of air support cannot fight, no matter how fanatically opposed it is to its potential adversary. The fact is that Iraq has already been deprived of roughly 80 percent of its air force. As each day of war passes, its air defenses are suffering colossal losses. The Americans, of course, have set about this operation in a very sensible way. They decided not to engage ground forces in the first days of the war in order to keep their losses to a minimum. Then they will overwhelm enemy positions, in Kuwait for example, with their air force.

Also, I rather doubt that the allies—or the multinational forces as they are now being called—will go any further than to liberate Kuwait. In other words, they will not go on to seize Iraq. If that were to happen, then I agree with you: the war would become quite protracted and unpleasant for the allied forces. On the whole, though, the present development of events shows that the United States and the multinational forces are achieving their goals.

[Gubernatorov] Let us look at the situation from another point of view. Enormous naval forces of the United States and its allies have now been concentrated in the Persian Gulf. Nuclear weapons are being carried aboard these warships. Judging by reports, there are over 500 nuclear warheads aboard U.S. surface vessels alone. There are also an unknown number of these weapons aboard allied ships. Hundreds of carrier-borne fighters are armed with free-fall nuclear bombs. Technically, these warheads are classified as tactical nuclear weapons. This is a designation that may lead us to simply regard them as pocket-sized nuclear weapons, as a kind of super-powerful dynamite. I remind you, however, that the destructive power of many of them is 10 to 15 times greater than that of the bomb which was dropped on Hiroshima, the bomb which killed over 80,000 people. Of course, I do not think that the allies are likely to use nuclear weapons against Iraq. I hope not, anyway. But then one is entitled to ask why the allied fleet is carrying these nuclear bombs on board?

[Antsiferov] Stanier, the former chief of staff of the British Armed Forces, was interviewed just the other day on British television. His experience includes the conduct of the Anglo-Argentinian war. He said that three conditions are needed to guarantee success in the military operations in the Persian Gulf region. First, the command and observation systems of the Iraqi forces have to be knocked out. Second, the system for utilizing and reinforcing the reserves has to be paralyzed. Third, the structure of supply lines and logistics has to be destroyed. If a British military chief who has considerable experience is to be believed, then as things are at present we have to acknowledge that, in spite of all the successes of the allied forces, none of these three conditions esential for military victory have yet been fulfilled.

There is another factor I would like to mention: this is the opening of a second front. I am speaking figuratively because there is no point of actual contact along this front. Nevertheless, Iraq's attack on Israel has, according to Israeli officals, placed the state in a position where it has to inflict a retaliatory strike on Iraq. Iraq has committed a strategic mistake. As political observers are noting, in particular the French television company TF-1, the fact that Iraq has succeeded in inflicting this strike is a triumph for Iraq from the political point of view.

It is interesting to see why this is so. In a commentary the French explain that by doing this, by declaring war to all intents and purposes on Israel, Iraq will clearly succeed in uniting around it those Arab forces that are opposed to Israel, mindful as they are of the conflict between Israel and the Arab states which has already lasted a long time, over 20 years. I do not think that this factor can be discounted. What do you think, Yuriy Konstantinovich?

[Tyssovskiy] Aleksandr Nikolayevich, I will try to respond to Valentin Petrovich first. It is absolutely obvious that things will not go as far as a nuclear war in this region. Nobody wants this, and that includes American and Israel. That can be considered axiomatic.

[Gubernatorov] I would merely like to stress that the presence of nuclear weapons does not, in itself, facilitate the proliferation of conflict. After all, as I understand it nuclear weapons are designed to deter an adversary.

[Tyssovskiy] I absolutely agree with you.

[Gubernatorov] The adversary naturally wants to possess nuclear weapons too. I think that countries like the United States, France, and Britain, which now have nuclear weapons in the Persian Gulf, should renounce them and should not bring them into this region.

[Antsiferov] I would like to add that, with regard to attempts to localize the conflict which you have spoken about, combat aircraft are now launching raids from air bases in Turkey. In other words, one can say that to all intents and purposes the war has come to the borders of the Soviet Union.

[Tyssovskiy] I hasten to reassure our listeners that the echoes of the war will not reach the borders of the Soviet Union in any way. Turkey has promised that it will not open a second front against Iraq, even though quite a large number of forces are concentrated there. The flights from Turkish bases certainly are a fact. But the point is that Saddam Husayn has not gone so mad that he will try in some way to stop these flights. Indeed, he does not have the power to do so. As for the delocalization of the conflict, one can mention the carpet bombing raids on Iraq made by the renowned U.S. Stratofortress B-52 bombers from Diego Garcia, an island in the Indian Ocean. But this certainly does not mean that the conflict will spread to other territories. Everything will be concentrated in the Persian Gulf zone: in Kuwait, and maybe to a certain extent on Iraqi territory.

There is another element which is very important. You mentioned Israel. To be quite honest, I do not see any special danger of Israel entering the war. It is a fact that it cannot enter the war. It can only strike some blows in retaliation for the attacks by those Scud missiles—which incidentally are Soviet-made—which Iraq has now launched several times against Tel Aviv, Haifa, and a number of other population centers.

It is clear that Iraq is counting on, and I would say strongly provoking, Israel to enter the war so that the Arab world will then come forward to defend Iraq. This has the definite aim of inflicting a blow on American interests not only in the Gulf zone but also in various other regions of the world.

In order to take part in the bombardment of Iraq and in air raids on Iraq, Israel will have to violate the airspace of Syria or Jordan, or even Saudi Arabia, which is a slightly roundabout way to this region. The Israelis are capable of attacks. They proved this several years ago by bombing the nuclear reactor at Osirak, or Osiris as it is called in the Western press.

[Antsiferov] This took place in Baghdad, if I am not mistaken. Am I right?

[Tyssovskiy] Yes, it is the same site near Baghdad that has come under American attack. This is not the only nuclear site, by the way. A range of nuclear installations are situated in the Karachok Mountains. This is new and serious information. These installations have also come under air attack from the allied planes, but this has not been widely published yet.

[Antsiferov] It is probable that this has been done as a preventive measure to stop Iraq from manufacturing its own....

[Tyssovskiy, interrupting] Yes, in order to prevent a basis to be created for the possible future development of nuclear weapons—in any case for the near future, for up to 10 years.

But Israel could make a big mistake here. I think that the Arab world and Jordan will retain their neutrality. They are caught between two fires and it is very dangerous for them to show their face. The only thing that I cannot understand is what kind of new military element Israel can bring in if it retaliates. Does it have more powerful military forces than the ones that are in the Persian Gulf region? Do they have more precise information than the United States on the whereabouts of various military targets?

They do have a satellite permanently stationed over Iraq, which is now transmitting more and more new information. We saw evidence of this on television. I think that even if Israel decides to undertake retaliation—and it will probably undertake such a move—I do not know by what means it will do so. It has to make some gesture to show that it is defending its population from the strikes of the Iraqi military.

[Antsiferov] Israel has made such a gesture. As far as I know, a state of emergency has already been imposed in Israel and a curfew is in force in the towns. In addition, there is another factor that cannot be discounted: Yasir 'Arafat and the PLO have called upon the Palestinian militants to carry out terrorist actions against allied countries that are fighting under the aegis of the United Nations against Iraq. We are talking about some 5,000 militants who are to carry out these acts. Israel could demonstrate its participation in this conflict by imposing some repressive measures against the Palestinians, especially since Israel has police experience in this regard.

In this sense, it could respond in this way to the actions by Iraq. It is quite another thing what political dividends Israel will get out of this and what response there will be to this in the Arab world. This is something different. I think that this factor cannot be discounted.

[Tyssovskiy] By no means. Nobody has discounted the fact that there will be attempts to carry out terrorist acts, including in the capitals of the West and in a range of other countries.

[Antsiferov] We hope that there will be enough common sense and that this will not happen.

[Tyssovskiy] But this has already happened. It is sufficient to recall that recently there were three explosions in Paris shops mainly belonging to Western companies. This is not the only example. There have already been attempts in the Philippines. The situation is most complex in Pakistan; demonstrations take place there regularly, and there are casualties. Generally speaking, there has already been a reponse. This response is, as I see it and as is to be expected, not so much lethal as....

[Gubernatorov, interrupting] Not so dangerous.

[Tyssovskiy] Yes, not as dangerous as many people that do not quite understand these issues thought it would be.

[Antsiferov] The whole point of what you are saying is that the response is not so lethal or dangerous. I cannot agree with you because people are being killed, Yuriy Konstantinovich. It is lethal enough and extremely dangerous, as I see it.

[Tyssovskiy] Let us talk about this from the practical point of view. Let us consider that the territory of Israel has been shelled by Iraq. Can one speak of such a terrible danger to the population? Potentially yes, but at the present moment the number of casualties is minimal. The Israelis have rallied behind their government regarding the position on retaliatory strikes. This is natural, even if only one person had been wounded. Do you understand? Even if one person was wounded this would happen.

Nevertheless, I have no worries at the present moment. If we speak of the militants of Yasir 'Arafat, be there 5,000 or who knows how many thousands, they have declared that they will fight on the side of Iraq. It is very difficult for me to imagine that it is possible to bring such a force to carry out terrorist acts unnoticed in Europe or the United States.

[Gubernatorov] By the way, these countries are undertaking special measures to prevent such terrorist acts from being carried out.

[Tyssovskiy] Valentin Petrovich, they have been carrying out such measures for at least one and one-half months, since the Iraqi leadership started to speak about terrorism. But Iraq has gone further than that. There is—and I would like to underline this—the hypocrisy of Saddam Husayn. He addressed his recent enemy Iran, asking it to stand on the side of Iraq and to enforce a defeat on American imperialism. Iran naturally refused to do so. That was to be expected. Try to understand the special, refined immorality of this request. To address an enemy which you were fighting only recently, and on which you inflicted horrible suffering with the war you waged against it, is unimaginable.

[Antsiferov] I would like to draw your attention to the following aspect of this conflict. No mater how monolithic and coordinated the allied actions are, the beginning of the military actions did not produce any euphoria. For instance the Swedish King Carl XVI expressed his deepest worries on receiving the news of the beginning of the war. Ingvar Carlsson, the Swedish prime minister, called the beginning of the war in the Persian Gulf a tragedy. Chancellor Helmut Kohl was very worried on receiving the news of the start of the military actions in the Persian Gulf, and so on. This list of politicians that have expressed their regret, their worries, and their opinions toward the beginning of the military activities themselves....

[Tyssovskiy, interrupting] These are opinions of support, I would like to underline.

[Antsiferov] Support, yes; but at the same time they expressed great worries. It may be said that the world community reluctantly, under the burden of circumstances, had to resort to force. But there is no euphoria and rejoicing in the world community as regards how the events are now developing in the Persian Gulf. The war is being conducted not to destroy Iraq, not to have a military victory over Iraq, but so that Iraq will fulfill the UN Security Council resolution on withdrawing from Kuwait.

[Gubernatorov] Thank you, very much. Our program has come to an end. I would like to remind our listeners that Aleksandr Antsiferov and Yuriy Tyssovskiy, both political observers of TASS, took part in our program.

Valentin Gubernatorov, foreign affairs commentator of All-Union Radio, presented the program.

Goodbye, comrades. All the best to you.

Airlines Avoiding War Cause Air Route Congestion

PM2401152991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Jan 91 First Edition p 3

[Report by TASS correspondent M. Tsyganov: "'Traffic Jams' On the Air Routes"]

[Text] Kuala Lumpur, 23 Jan—The military operations in the Persian Gulf are making work difficult for international airlines, the Malaysian newspaper THE STAR writes. "Airplanes flying to Europe from the capitals of Southeast Asian states used to fly over the Bay of Bengal and across the Near East," N. Saad [name as transliterated], one of the directors of the civil aviation department of Malaysia, said. "Now all airplanes have to set a course for Thailand and India which creates 'traffic jams' on the air routes. If the war drags on, the situation could get even more complicated."

The airlines now consider only two routes from Southeast Asia to Europe and back safe. One of these lies over the southern part of Saudi Arabia, and the other is via Tashkent. This lengthening of the route could lead to a new rise in the cost of air tickets.

The situation that has arisen also creates a few problems for the Soviet side. According to certain information, more than 300 airplanes are using the Termez-Tashkent and Termez-Samarkand air corridors daily. It is necessary to react promptly to any emergency—for example, cargo on board a Singapore Airlines Boeing 747-400 caught fire recently and the plane had to make a forced landing in Tashkent. Fortunately everything turned out all right, and the Singapore airline expressed its gratitude to the Tashkent airport leadership for its help in accommodating passengers and the prompt work of all the services.

Aeroflot itself, which has also had to give up its optimal route to Southeast Asia across Dubayy, is running up against serious problems. As a TASS correspondent was told at the airline's Malaysian office, the problems are linked primarily with a shortage of fuel in Pakistan and India, a consequence of which is that some flights have to be made via Colombo.

United States & Canada

Gorbachev Receives U.S. Ambassador 24 Jan

PM2501100991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 January 91 Second Edition p 5

[Text] Moscow January 24—President Mikhail Gorbachev today received the U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Jack Matlock, who handed to him a letter from President George Bush.

Gorbachev and Matlock had a thorough conversation.

Bessmertnykh Plans To Meet With Baker

LD2401182891 Moscow TASS in English 1816 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Matyahs]

[Text] Washington January 24 TASS—Soviet Foreign minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh will visit Washington late this week for talks with President George Bush, U.S. Administration officials announced here on Thursday.

Bessmertnykh will also meet U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to discuss a broad agenda of Soviet-American relations, including the situation in the Baltic region and the completion of the treaty on the reduction of strategic offensive weapons to be signed at the Soviet-American summit in Moscow on February 11-13.

The decision on whether Bush will go to Moscow in February to meet President Mikhail Gorbachev will be adopted soon, the ASSOCIATED PRESS reported.

State Department Remarks on Lithuania Deplored

PM2501110391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 91 Second Edition p 4

[Report by A. Moskvin under the rubric "Rejoinder": "Better Count to Ten"]

[Text] Some people consider glasnost the main achievement of perestroyka, and some consider it absolutely the only one. There are also people who recall with delight the times when all improvisations in our press were possible only within a rigid framework permitted from above. But there probably are not particularly many of these latter people, and glasnost, as was written earlier, is "deservedly loved by our people."

Since it is natural for people to treat with partiality a beloved child who is difficult to raise, we also react particularly sensitively to attempts on glasnost. Particularly those made by the new mass media which are coming into being in abundance. This is understandable, because for them this is not the whim of a satiated lover of "spicy" facts but a very condition of their existence. Moreover, in our society, which has become electrified to the very limit, any hint—even a fleeting one—of an attempt on the rights which were acquired not so long ago stirs up a hornets' nest in response. From this viewpoint it is possible to understand, if not excuse, the irritated reaction of the radical press to the last hours of the recently concluded debate in the Union legislature.

It is another matter when it is a question of other states' citizens, particularly those holding responsible official posts. Such as Marlin Fitzwater, the U.S. President's press secretary. From his lips words to the effect that President Gorbachev is "trying to subordinate or muzzle the press" sound like a statement of incontrovertible fact. You would have thought that during the few days since then he could have seen for himself the erroneousness of his approach. But no, the pressure—this is probably the most polite word for this instance—from official Washington on the Soviet mass media has intensified.

Recently the U.S. Department of State even made a statement on our press coverage of the events in Lithuania. As far as I can remember—let more knowledgeable people correct me—there has not been a single instance of our Foreign Ministry so categorically lecturing the U.S. press and television, for example. But "Central Television and the domestic news service of TASS" were accused of "doing Soviet people a disservice with their one-sided coverage of the crisis in the Baltic region and helping to exacerbate an already tense situation." Note, it is not a question of a personal opinion or of newspaper polemics but of a statement by the U.S. foreign policy department! In my opinion, in diplomatic language this is precisely what is known as interference in internal affairs.

For, in actual fact, people in Washington cannot fail to realize that our press now is just as split as the whole of society. By supporting so clearly and strongly one viewpoint, albeit one dear to them, they are still further deepening this split. They fear for the fate of pluralism of opinions and information? In vain! Not only the newspapers but also the radio, for example, provide a spread of viewpoints. The independent radio "Echo of Moscow," for example, or, more accurately, its correspondent Lazar Shestakov, reported that a gas attack was expected on the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet building, but there were not enough gas masks for everyone. Some people will say: That is pluralism for you; others will grieve: The guys broadcast a panicky rumor, of which there were probably quite a few during those tragic hours in Lithuania. Yet this is merely a characteristic of their professional standard and of the reliability of the sources of information. Rebukes against television? But it is also possible to see on television both what Nevzorov's group filmed and what Podnieks' group filmed.

In conclusion, if U.S. diplomats are giving advice to Soviet journalists, let them also hear our advice in return: There is no need for hasty assessments. When they get a strong urge to speak out, it is not out of place to recall the recommendation of a literary hero: Count to 10 before speaking.

Baltics Events May Stop Economic Aid to USSR

LD2501033191 Moscow World Service in English 2300 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Commentary by Vladislav Kozyakov]

[Text] The U.S. Congress is considering resolutions over the recent weeks in Lithuania and Latvia and even a suggestion to stop American economic aid to the Soviet Union. Here is commentary by Vladislav Kozyakov.

This concern seems only natural, for it also echoes the feelings of Soviet people. The tragic events in Vilnius and Riga are being investigated. President Gorbachev said he is deeply concerned with what happened, just like everyone else is. When Congressmen and Administration officials in Washington, however, alongside expressions of anxiety, question the possibility of economic aid to the USSR, this of course arouses puzzlement. We could recall certain precedents. There have been American sanctions declared on the sale of grain and the supply of pipes for gas pipelines, as well as on trade missions. But all these sanctions have had the same results, they damaged America itself and thus had to be abandoned.

Could something similar happen this time, too, and will the American farmers not find themselves at a disadvantage if the idea of sanctions prevails in Washington? For if it does, this would concern guaranteed credits for Soviet grain purchases. A number of farmers' organizations expressed their disappointment over the president's decision, even at a time when it was announced. They regarded the guaranteed credits promised to them clearly inadequate. But there is something else that seems to matter. With all adversities rooted in its current domestic problems, the Soviet Union is turning into a major trade partner for the Western countries. The BUSINESS WEEK magazine has just disclosed that large contracts are now being worked out. The American trade consortium, for one, has come up with a project for $10 billion. The plan involves the extraction of oil and manufacture of goods in the USSR. This is only one such fact.

In its analysis, made after the events in Lithuania, BUSINESS WEEK concludes that the unstable situation in the USSR is causing alarm among Western investors, but they are in no hurry to pack up and give up their colossal untapped market. But on top of the economic aspect there is a political one, too. Those American officials who call for economic sanctions against the USSR have clearly been affected by the inertia of old political thinking. Instead of analyzing what happened and trying to find out what caused the tragedy, they are in a hurry to resort to warnings and sanctions against Moscow. The use of such methods, so typical of the old days of confrontation, is all the more odd today when bilateral ties are at a responsible stage.

The USSR and the United States are on the threshold of signing a treaty on a 50 percent reduction in strategic arms. The accord is almost ready for signing at a summit in Moscow next month. The two countries are taking part in the anti-Iraqi coalition at the United Nations. This is an unprecedented rapprochement between the two superpowers. It is obviously in the mutual interests of the Soviet and American nations to cherish these new relations and preserve them against attacks no matter on what pretext they are made.

TASS Assails Brzezinski for 'Rash' Views

LD2401210791 Moscow TASS in English 2035 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS international commentator Yevgeniy Babenko]

[Text] Moscow January 24 TASS—Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski forecast in his time that inter-ethnic relations could become a major headache for the Soviet Union. But he was certainly rash to tell Washington in an article published by the WORLD MONITOR last November, to build its relations with Moscow proceeding from the fact of vital importance: the Soviet Union will soon be no more.

Professor Brzezinski is again equally rash in 1991. In his interview with the Voice of America on January 23, he clearly strove to give a mighty downhill push to Baltic developments. He called for the West to formally recognise independent Baltic republics thus giving an important signal to Moscow.

Brzezinski then urged aid to "democrats", not the central Soviet Government. He mixes notions: the important thing is for the aid to reach those who need it. No preserves can survive the lengthy process of clearing up who is and who is not a democrat [sentence as received].

In another pronouncement in the same interview Brzezinski insisted that the West no longer critically needed the Soviet Union's support for the allied forces in the Gulf conflict. Though it is not an opportune point to remind the Professor about political decency and universal human tact, something needs to be said. The Soviet Union's involvement was welcomed by all, including Professor Brzezinski, when subtle diplomatic moves were being considered and Security Council Resolutions were being drawn up. But as soon as missiles and cannons went into play, Brzezinski's tone changed: He now calls for the West to feel undeterred by memories of the recent past. There is hardly anyone who would call this switch moral or clean.

In yet another snatch from the interview with the Voice of America, Brzezinski said Washington should consider cancelling or postponing the Soviet-American summit scheduled for February. These recommendations, if followed, would surely directly harm the interests of the United States.

First of all, collapse of the Soviet Union would wreak chaos in international relations with unpredictable consequences for world order. Many wise politicians in Western countries have called for efforts to avert such an outcome in the Baltic region and the Soviet Union as a whole.

As regards the Soviet-U.S. summit, one should not forget that its pivotal point will be the signing of the strategic arms reduction treaty aimed at removing the burden of the nuclear war danger now weighing on the shoulders of mankind".

U.S. Opinion 'Not Unanimous' on Gulf War

PM2401143991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Jan 91 Second Edition p 5

["Viewpoint" by Gennadiy Vasilyev: "What Price Insight?"]

[Text] The heart of America is beating faster. Flash reports from the Persian Gulf region are disturbing and alarming people and causing misgivings. Cardiographs belonging to public opinion institutes that have fixed their sensors to the country's body are recording a sharp peak. With the beginning of military operations G. Bush's popularity soared to recently unprecedented heights. Some 86 percent of Americans polled expressed a positive opinion of the President's activity. That is 20 percent higher than his prewar ratings and represents a record for any U.S. president in the last 30 years.

So far the war has come fairly easy to the members of the anti-Saddam coalition. Hence the upsurge in patriotism in the United States, the euphoria, and people's desire—customary at this kind of time—to back their leader, who is the supreme commander in chief of the country's Armed Forces. But does this mean that Americans are unanimous in their attitude to the war? I think that I would not be erring against the truth were I to answer this question in the negative. I am referring not only to the noisy antiwar demonstrations sweeping the country. But also to something more deep-seated.

I could see for myself during my recent trip to New York that America is not unanimous in its attitude toward how to get the Iraqi leadership to meet the international community's demands—to withdraw its troops from occupied Kuwait. Congressman S. Solarz, using all his eloquence, demonstrated that the military solution to the Persian Gulf crisis should take priority over the peaceful diplomatic solution. America should not be content with expelling Iraqi troops from Kuwait, he said. The main U.S. aim should be to physically annihilate Saddam Husayn and destroy enterprises working to develop Iraqi nuclear weapons. The congressman set out fairly precisely the plan for military operations, now well-known by the name "Desert Storm"—the use of U.S. air superiority and bomb and missile strikes against vitally important facilities in Iraq. He claimed that there would not be a second Vietnam, that the war would be short-lived and losses small. His audience—this took place at the "Century" club—of businessmen, lawyers, and journalists gave the legislator's speech a guarded reception. Their questions voiced alarm and mistrust of the victory scenario. My neighbor at table, the head of a private television network, commented: "Something always goes wrong with the military.... I would prefer diplomats rather than military men to be involved."

Reports from across the Atlantic illustrate that the initial euphoria in the United States generated by the first victorious reports from the Persian Gulf is beginning to subside. The "blitzkrieg" does not seem to have taken place. Despite the fact that a fantastic amount of explosives have been dropped on the Iraqis' heads, the political tasks have not been accomplished and the enemy has not capitulated. The prospect of a protracted war involving major ground forces and, consequently, considerable losses is increasingly emerging. An exclusively civilian U.S. organization—the Congressional Budget Office—now announces in its report that, if military operations last six months, spending on the war will total $85 billion and 45,000 Americans will be killed or wounded.

Variant views in U.S society that have been obscured by the reaction to the first optimistic reports from the Near East are far more serious than might have seemed at first glance. I think that they are founded on the fundamental difference between the military and diplomatic assessments of how to resolve international conflicts. Few people question the fact that the Persian Gulf crisis was brought about by the Iraqi leadership's adventurist actions. One can hardly dispute either that the aggressor should be punished and justice restored. Everyone knows that the U.S. Administration is operating not only with its Congress' authorization but also with the UN mandate. Nonetheless the very course of the tragic events is raising fundamental questions over and over in all their magnitude—the relationship between force and reason, the limits of force, and the final supremacy of peaceful diplomatic means over military means.

These questions are not new to the United States. Americans are diplomatic people. Nevertheless they have traditionally preferred force to persuasion. The last few decades have seen considerable changes to these stock phrases in public consciousness. At first the Vietnam war demonstrated the "impotence of force." The fundamental restructuring of international relations that has begun in recent years showed the possibility and advantage of building a world order based not on force or the threat of force but on respect for mutual interest and on compromise.

So, are we once again faced with an upsurge of "hawkish" sentiments despite the recent positive changes? Again with the priority of force over reason? I think that the final verdict pronounced by public opinion will depend on the course of events in those areas where bombs are now exploding and shots being fired. And on how the war, which has proved a far more serious and grave business than Congressman Solarz presented it, develops. Tragically, too often knowledge of the truth comes at the cost of bloodshed. Washington seems to be beginning to sober up. But will there also be insight in Baghdad?

Gorbachev Receives IBM Chairman at Kremlin

PM2501101391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 January 91 Second Edition p 1

[Text] On 24 January, M.S. Gorbachev received in the Kremlin Michael Armstrong, president of the American IBM Corporation, one of the major companies in the world in the sphere of information science and computer engineering. M. Armstrong was accompanied by R. Riverso and H. Breitenstein, members of the IBM board, and B. Polishchuck, the corporation's representative in the USSR.

M. Armstrong told M.S. Gorbachev of the main areas of IBM's work in the USSR. This concerns in particular joint scientific research, organizing the production of computer equipment, equipping schools and institutions of higher learning with computers, creating systems to control civil aviation passenger and cargo transport, and developing other major projects on the basis of modern technology. He especially singled out the corporation's interest in doing business with the USSR on a long-term basis with the use of new, progressive forms in the interests of setting up a IBM infrastructure in the USSR.

The USSR president welcomed this work. He assessed highly the large-scale, far-sighted approach of IBM management toward cooperation with Soviet partners, and its intention to settle seriously in the Soviet market and to bank on long-term projects. Such projects will be given the necessary backing. Mikhail Gorbachev dwelt on measures being taken to reform the country's economy and to create the conditions for its integration with the world economy.

Michael Armstrong expressed confidence in the success of the profound reforms being undertaken, noting that this confidence relies on the immense scientific, intellectual, and production potential which the USSR possesses.

A.I. Volskiy, B.Ye. Panyukov, V.I. Shimko, and G.A. Yagodnik took part in the conversation, which was amicable and open in character.

Northeast Asia

Reports Continue on Gorbachev, Nakayama Talks

PRAVDA Reports Talks

PM2401145991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 91 Second Edition p 1

[TASS report: "M.S. Gorbachev's Talks with T. Nakayama"]

[Text] The Soviet president received Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama in the Kremlin 23 January. Making the minister's acquaintance, the president evaluated his visit as confirming the dynamics of the Soviet-Japanese dialogue and voiced the hope that in cooperation with the new USSR foreign minister he will endeavor to ensure worthy preparations for the top-level visit to Japan scheduled for April.

T. Nakayama handed the president a message from Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu, who reckons that the visit will be an historic event in relations between the two countries. The minister also reported that legislature, the public, and business circles all welcome M.S. Gorbachev's visit. This is also confirmed by the stream of invitations, letters, and wishes being addressed to him from Japan.

The specific dates of the visit and the progress in preparing for this event, which, according to M.S. Gorbachev, could acquire a really large-scale, profitable nature, were discussed.

There was a preliminary exchange of opinions on the most difficult question of the drafting of a peace treaty—the territorial question. The President asked for all aspects of the problem, its historical and contemporary context, and the Japanese and Soviet aspects to be taken into account. How to combine all this must be the subject of talks and of questions, and we are not short of good will. But the questing will be successful if it is geared to a balance of interests.

At the minister's request, M.S. Gorbachev expressed his viewpoint on problems connected with the war in the Persian Gulf zone. He confirmed the immutability of the principled assessment of the reasons which led to it, the significance of Soviet-U.S. concord on this question, and the determination to adhere firmly to the line agreed on in the UN Security Council. He emphasized the special importance for the destiny of that region and for the development of the world situation of taking account of the possible consequences of military operations, whose use must be consonant with the aim set in the Security Council resolution. Otherwise unjustifiably large casualties and destruction and great complications when the war is over cannot be avoided.

T. Nakayama touched on the question of the events in Latvia and Lithuania. He repeatedly said that it is desirable to resolve problems in a humane, peaceful way, although the president is more convinced of this than anyone. The conversation on this topic confirmed once again that correspondents' conclusions based on hasty information are not always suitable for making deductions at a state level, particularly when fundamental achievements of world politics are questioned on the basis of such information.

The president and the minister agreed to continue the intensive preparations in all areas for the Soviet-Japanese summit meeting.

Participating were A.A. Bessmertnykh, A.S. Chernyayev, H. Owada, Ambassadors L.A. Chizhov and S. Edamura, and N. Hedo.

IZVESTIYA Reports Communique

PM2401202591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 January 91 Union Edition p 6

[Text] Taro Nakayama, Japan's minister of foreign affairs, paid an official visit to the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Soviet Government, from 21 to 23 January 1991.

USSR Foreign Minister A.A. Bessmertnykh and Japanese Foreign Minister T. Nakayamad continued the discussion of questions relating to the official visit of USSR President M.S. Gorbachev to Japan, scheduled for April 1991. The ministers confirmed their unity of views regarding the fact that the visit to Japan by USSR President M.S. Gorbachev is intended to ensure a fundamental improvement in Soviet-Japanese relations, to raise them to a qualitatively new level, and to make an important contribution to the cause of ensuring peace and prosperity in the Asian-Pacific region and throughout the world.

Having expressed satisfaction with the progress of practical preparations for the forthcoming visit to Japan by USSR President M.S. Gorbachev, the ministers signed a memorandum on additional matters connected with preparations for the visit.

In accordance with an arrangement recorded in the joint Soviet-Japanese statement of 10 October 1973, the ministers continued talks relating to the conclusion of a Soviet-Japanese peace treaty. In the course of these talks, the sides set out their understanding on aspects connected with removing difficulties existing in bilateral relations, and agreed to promote the further progress of the talks with a view to concluding a peace treaty.

The ministers gave a positive assessment of the activity of the working group on a peace treaty. An accord was reached on holding the next session of the working group on a peace treaty in February 1991.

During the course of the latest regular meeting of the foreign ministers of the two countries an in-depth exchange of opinions was held on other current issues in Soviet-Japanese relations, as well as on a broad range of international problems of mutual interest.

The ministers noted with satisfaction the successful development of cooperation between the two countries in overcoming the consequences of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear electric power station and expressed their intention to continue to promote cooperation in this field on the basis of the points set out in the memorandum on this question of 6 September 1990.

Soviet Foreign Minister A.A. Bessmertnykh expressed gratitude to the people and government of Japan for the humanitarian aid they had rendered to the Soviet Union and especially for the help in overcoming the consequences of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear electric power station.

The ministers exchanged letters regarding a mutual increase in the number of permanently accredited correspondents.

The ministers were unanimous in realizing the need to make irreversible the process of improving the international situation at global and regional level and further developing this process.

In connection with the situation in the Persian Gulf area, the ministers expressed serious concern over the unsuccessful efforts of the world community undertaken up to the last moment aimed at a peaceful settlement of the crisis caused by Iraq's aggression against Kuwait. The sides expressed deep regret that Iraq did not respond to the repeated calls from the international community to leave Kuwait and thereby, in essence, blocked the way to a non-war outcome to the situation. The sides also expressed serious concern over Iraq's military actions aimed at giving the present conflict the character of an Arab-Israeli confrontation. They confirmed that the immediate and unconditional fulfillment of all resolutions of the UN Security Council in connection with this crisis is the only way to restore peace and security in the Gulf zone. The sides expressed themselves in favor of continuing consultations on questions of settling this crisis, both within the framework of the UN and on a bilateral basis.

The ministers spoke of the importance of pooling the efforts of the world community in solving such problems as averting regional conflicts, the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and missiles, ensuring greater transparency and openness in the export of armaments, and a reduction in exports of such armaments, which destabilize the international situation, and also spoke of the readiness of both countries to constructively cooperate in these objectives.

The sides came out in favor of the need to speed up the talks on working out a convention on the banning and destruction of chemical weapons, under effective control, and the speediest reaching of an accord at these talks.

The ministers had a discussion on questions concerning safeguarding security in the Asian-Pacific region. In this connection they expressed satisfaction at the opening in December 1990 of consultations between the USSR Foreign Ministry and the Japanese Foreign Ministry on questions of foreign policy planning, and called for a continuation of such consultations.

The ministers highly appraised the development of the dialogue between the DPRK and the Republic of Korea, which they believe is promoting an easing of tension on the Korean peninsula.

Japanese Foreign Minister T. Nakayama gave a positive appraisal of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the Repubic of Korea and spoke of the intention of the Japanese side to move toward a normalization of Japanese-North Korean diplomatic relations, also with a view to promoting further easing of tension on the Korean peninsula.

USSR Foreign Minister A.A. Bessmertnykh welcomed Japan's intention to normalize relations with the DPRK.

The ministers gave a positive appraisal of the fact that the process of a settlement to the Cambodian problem has entered a final stage, and favored the need for further efforts, first and foremost by the Cambodian sides, as well as the interested states, aimed at the speediest attainment of an all-embracing settlement. In this context they stressed the importance of resuming the work of the Paris conference.

Japanese Foreign Minister T. Nakayama invited USSR Foreign Minister A.A. Bessmertnykh to pay an official visit to Japan before the Soviet-Japanese summit meeting in April of this year. The invitation was accepted with gratitude. A specific timetable for the visit will be agreed through diplomatic channels.

Taking part in the talks were: on the Soviet side—I.A. Rogachev, deputy USSR minister of foreign affairs; L.A. Chizhov, USSR ambassador to Japan; and executive staff of the USSR Foreign Ministry and the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Foreign Ministry; from the Japanese side—H. Owada, deputy Japanese foreign minister; S. Edamura, Japanese ambassador to the USSR; and executive staff of the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

The talks in Moscow were held in a businesslike and constructive atmosphere and were substantive and useful to both sides.

Near East & South Asia

Saddam Reportedly Executes Two Iraqi Commanders

LD2501112891 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1100 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Text] President Saddam Husayn has executed the commanders of the Iraqi Air Force and air defense. This is reported by the INTERFAX agency quoting sources at the USSR Ministry of Defense. True, the report does not indicate when specifically they were shot.

Defense Ministry Cites 'Propaganda' on Policy

LD2401163191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1447 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Moscow, 24 Jan (TASS)—The Press Center of the USSR Defense Ministry today distributed an announcement in connection with a campaign in some Western mass media. The announcement says:

The Soviet Union occupies a clear, unambiguous position regarding the military crisis in the Persian Gulf region. In the statement by the USSR President of 17 January 1991, it is indicated that the tragic turn of events was provoked by the refusal of the leadership of Iraq to fulfill the demand of the world community and withdraw its troops from Kuwait. It is also stated that the leadership of our country will take all measures for the earliest end to the war and the restoration of peace. The practical activity of bodies of state administration, including those engaged in military affairs, is defined by this clear position of the Soviet leadership.

This evident truth has to be remembered in connection with the fact that, in the framework of the propaganda campaign being mounted in some Western countries aimed at discrediting the Soviet Union's policy in the Middle East, in the last few days more and more provocative rumors and fabrications have been distributed. Characteristic is the article by B. Gertz [name as received], published in THE WASHINGTON TIMES. Couched in the spirit of the times of the "cold war," it is essentially devoid of documentary facts, but abounds in references to "CIA circles," and to unnamed analysts and officials. The provocative, instigatory nature of some of its "discoveries" forces one to dwell on them.

For example, the article claims that there are 150 Soviet miltiary advisers in Iraq. Competent persons have repeatedly given elucidations that our advisers have not been in Iraq. It is only a matter of military experts carrying out tasks connected with the servicing of equipment and armaments. By the start of the aggression there were some 200 such people in Iraq. Subsequently, as was reported in the press, their number has been steadily reduced. The last Soviet military expert left Iraq on 9 January 1991, before the start of military operations.

There is also a similar level of authenticity in the data cited in the article concerning alleged continuing deliveries to Iraq of Soviet military equipment and armaments. Fulfilling the resolutions of the UN Security Council, the Soviet Union has not been making delivery to Iraq of any models of combat equipment, armaments, or spares since August 1990. As for the data which has appeared in some American sources about alleged continuing flights by Soviet military transport planes to Iraq for the purpose of delivering combat equipment and weapons there, military transport planes have not made any flights to that country since April 1990.

A malicious fabrication is the claim that the USSR has allegedly been making these deliveries through third countries. In intergovernmental agreements, the ban on Soviet arms and combat equipment being conveyed to other countries without the USSR's consent is especially stipulated. The Soviet Union did not give such consent.

Also to be regarded as provocatory are the insinuations connected with intelligence activity of relevant Soviet bodies allegedly taking solace in favor of Iraq, and concerning the transmission of photographs of military designation from space and in particular from the Mir station. Such photographs have never been transmitted by the USSR Defense Ministry to anyone, including allied countries. Nor do the claims of the presence of Soviet stations for receiving and processing satellite information on foreign territories correspond to reality.

There is no doubt as to the true aims of such publications and of the said propaganda campaign as a whole. What we are dealing with is an attempt to cast a shadow over the position of the Soviet Union regarding the crisis in the Persian Gulf. In this connection, the question arises: Who stands to gain by this?

Iraqi Cites 'Brazen' U.S.-Zionist Aggression

PM2401230191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 25 Jan 91 First Edition p 3

[Interview with Ghafil Jasim Husayn, Iraqi ambassador to the USSR, by observer R. Mustafin; place and date not given: "'We Will Win a Decisive Victory'"]

[Text] [Mustafin] How do you assess the results of the first few days of the war?

[Husayn] The imperialist U.S.-Zionist aggression against Iraq is a brazen act. The aim of the aggression is to destroy the Arab potential that Iraq represents. The aggressors want to destroy our economy and our military might as well as our people and our patriotic regime, which has never submitted to any outside force.

The aggression began with a large-scale military attack aimed at destroying the heroic Iraqi people's property. Strikes were made against population centers, purely civilian, economic, and scientific installations, and even against religious shrines. As a result of the first few days of the war, during which the Americans have committed barbaric crimes, the aggressor has suffered large losses of aircraft, missiles, and pilots. This has become known despite the disinformation campaign of unprecedented falsehood that has accompanied the aggression. The events of the first few days have completely upset the calculations that Iraq would be quickly destroyed.

[Mustafin] What are your forecasts regarding the length and scale of the war?

[Husayn] We hope that hostilities will end in the very near future. But if the aggressors persistently pursue the war, it will turn into a large-scale and protracted affair. Then the Americans and their allies will suffer enormous losses in all areas. We will certainly win a decisive victory over Iraq's age-old enemies.

[Mustafin] Following the Iraqi missile strikes against Israel, how likely is it that the war will change in nature and turn into an Arab-Israeli conflict?

[Husayn] We believe that the aggression by the United States and its allies against Iraq has been carried out for two main reasons. First, in order to protect the Zionist entity. Second, in order to establish its dominance over the region and to continue plundering the wealth of the region's peoples. This is being done with the help of treacherous agents whom they have placed in power and whom the United States and its allies are committed to defend at all costs.

We have incontrovertible proof that Israel has been participating directly and indirectly—through the United States and its allies—in the aggression against Iraq and the Arab nation.

The expulsion of the Palestinian people, the attempts to destroy it, the contempt shown for its legitimate rights for more than 40 years, the continuing occupation of territory belonging to several Arab states, and the concentration of Israeli Armed Forces are all signs of a possible confrontation.

Dzasokhov Talks With Egyptian Envoy Noted

PM2401170191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 91 Second Edition p 5

[Unattributed report: "Opinions Exchanged"]

[Text] A.S. Dzasokhov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet International Affairs Committee, received Egyptian Ambassador Ahmad Mahir al-Sayyid on 23 January at his own request.

During the talks, opinions were exchanged on the development of the situation in the Gulf. A.S. Dzasokhov briefed the ambassador on the measures being taken by the USSR Supreme Soviet and its International Affairs Committee to settle the current conflict and to seek any constructive opportunities for speedily ending it by peaceful political means. The need was also stressed for the UN Security Council resolutions to be unswervingly fulfilled, and hope was expressed that the United Nations and its secretary general would continue their efforts in that direction.

The Egyptian representative's attention was drawn to the importance of making full use of the peace-making potential afforded by the Arab states.

The Egyptian ambassador made a high assessment of the USSR's position which is aimed at ending the current conflict in the Gulf, and advocated extensive international cooperation among all parties interested in a settlement.

Mubarak Consults With Soviet Envoy in Egypt

LD2401114591 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic 20 Jan 91 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Message To Mubarak From Gorbachev"]

[Text] Yesterday morning President Husni Mubarak received Mr. Vladimir Polyakov, Soviet ambassador in Cairo.

Following the meeting, the ambassador said he had handed a message to President Mubarak from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev about the situation in the Gulf. He said: At the meeting we dealt with that situation in the context of the continuing consultations between the Egyptian and Soviet leaders. The Soviet side devotes great interest to these consultations, within the framework of the current developments in the Gulf region.

Asked whether the Soviet Union was exerting efforts to halt the fighting in the Gulf, the Soviet ambassador said: The Soviet Union's position is fixed with regard to the Gulf crisis and the Soviet leadership has urged world leaders to halt the fighting in the Gulf and end the present conflict. He also said that President Gorbachev is in constant contact with President Bush.

He added: The Soviet Union's position is based on the Security Council resolutions, and in that context we are making every effort to persuade Saddam Husayn to withdraw from Kuwait so that Kuwait is restored as an independent and sovereign state. He pointed out that President Gorbachev the day before yesterday had sent a very urgent message to Saddam Husayn. He also said: I have no information as to whether our ambassador in Baghdad has handed it to Saddam Husayn.

On Iraq's missile attack on Israel for the second successive day, he said: We are against launching attacks on Israel, because that could lead to the expansion of the war zone.

On Moscow's position if Israel retaliates, he said: Israel must assess its position, and I emphasize that Israel's involvement in the war would lead to its expansion, and that would result in disastrous consequences—which is probably is Saddam Husayn's objective.

Belonogov Receives PLO Officials on Gulf

LD2401130591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1240 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Moscow, 24 Jan (TASS)—Deputy USSR Foreign Minister Aleksandr Belonogov received today PLO Executive members Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu Mazin) and Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh, who are in Moscow. The conversation focused on the extremely dangerous situation which has emerged in the Persian Gulf region and in the Near East as a result of the Kuwait crisis having moved into the phase of armed confrontation. The sides expressed their firm adherence to the course of a most speedy ending of military operations and the search for political solutions to the conflict based on the principles of international legality.

PLO Envoy Highlights Postition on Terrorism, Iraq

PM2501100591 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 25 Jan 91 p 3

[Interview with Sa'id Abu-Imarah, PLO envoy extraordinary to Moscow, by S. Ivanov; place and date not given; "PLO: Allah, Bring America to Its Senses!"—first two paragraphs are correspondent's introduction]

[Text] The tight ring of Western journalists around the deputy head of our Foreign Ministry voiced very different questions. But one stuck in my mind: Has everything been done to defend the anti-Iraq coalition's diplomatic missions from possible terrorist acts in Moscow? This was a week ago when the word "war" was first heard.

The State of Palestine's Embassy in the USSR is housed in a small, old private residence in the center of the capital. Sa'id Abu-Imarah, envoy extraordinary, is now in command here.

[Ivanov] Comrade Sa'id, reports have appeared in the Western press saying that Palestinian groupings under Abu 'Abbas and Abu Nidal have announced the beginning of a series of terrorist acts against U.S. and British missions. What comment would you make on these statements.

[Abu-Imarah] The PLO has always opposed and will oppose any terrorist acts in any part of the world. Particularly if, God forbid, this occurs in the Soviet Union. But there is a war on and anything can happen in wartime conditions. That is why we Palestinians think that the armed conflict in the Persian Gulf should end as rapidly as possible. All peoples have the right to live in peace. We are deeply troubled by the fate of the peaceful population in Iraq and Kuwait, who are now coming under these barbaric bombings.

I would like our position to be totally clear, however. Since the very beginning of the conflict the PLO has put forward peace initiatives in which it has stated on several occasions that the conflicts between Iraq and Kuwait should be resolved within the framework of the Arab home without foreign intervention. Palestinians have too much grievous experience of the consequences of Western countries, primarily the United States, "mediating" in our people's affairs. I am profoundly convinced that in this case, too, all peaceful means have not been used to prevent the unleashing of war.

[Ivanov] In his statements Saddam Husayn has frequently said that he is fighting for the interests of the Arab people, including the Palestinian people. What Palestinian interests is the Iraqi leader defending?

[Abu-Imarah] The six months since August 1990 is a long enough period to form positions and opinions on the events taking place. It is quite obvious that the overwhelming majority of people favor the peaceful resolution of all problems in the Near East, including the Gulf problem. The United States is not, of course, fighting to liberate Kuwait at all and is only interested in retaining its supremacy over the region's oil wealth. We can see the U.S. desire to strike at Iraq's economic and military might in order to prevent its taking part in determining the fate of the peoples of the Near East.

For decades America has sided with Israel, offering it military and political backing. Today the Arabs and Palestinians see Iraq as a strong state capable of counterbalancing the United States and Israel. I think that Iraq with its backing in the Arab world represents a balance of forces that would result in the peaceful resolution of all Near East problems, including the Palestinian problem, on a just basis.

That is why we have sided with Iraq. That is why we advocate the speediest cessation of the war.

Report on Iraqi 'Secret Weapon,' Terrorism Eyed

PM2501105191 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 25 Jan 91 p 3

[Report by special correspondent A. Shumilin: "Husayn's Secret Weapon?"]

[Excerpt] Cairo—[passage omitted] As well as the enormous number of his soldiers, the Baghdad ruler is prepared to sacrifice without delay, Saddam Husayn has also occasionally been mentioning some "secret weapon" recently. The majority of specialists today agree that we should hardly expect Baghdad to use any technological innovation. It is obviously a case of sophisticated methods of sacrificing specially trained Iraqis with a view to causing both military and civilian casualties among his adversaries. On the military plane, observers in Cairo believe that it is most probable that strikes will be delivered against the concentration of allied troops with the aid of suicide pilots, some kind of "Iraqi kamikaze pilots." The newspapers report that "kamikaze" aircraft have been reliably concealed from the allies' reconnaissance in underground bunkers. It is true that it is reported that there is allegedly not a single runway now on Iraqi territory which has been left untouched by the allies' aerial bombs.

The second option for the dictator's "secret weapon," the Cairo newspaper AL-AHBAR writes in particular, is the network of secret agents in Europe prepared to use chemical and bacteriological bombs in addition to ordinary explosive in the capitals of the European countries. Their targets have been defined: airports and airline offices, plants, schools, trains and railroads, oil refineries and even hospitals in which the wounded will be undergoing treatment. The world's largest oil refinery, in Rotterdam, has allegedly been identified as one of the most important targets. Nor will the terrorists overlook the mass media in Europe. There have already been threats from Baghdad against the BBC.

Iraq Reported To Use Embassies for Subversion

'Terrorist' Plans Noted

PM2401153391 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 91 p 3

[Report by A. Shumilin: "Chronicle of the War"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Given the complete destruction of strategic installations and the damage sustained by very important establishments and communications centers, the Iraqi leadership has moved basic components of its Foreign Ministry into the Iraqi Embassy building in Jordan's capital, Amman. Coordination of the activity of Iraqi embassies abroad is being carried out from there. Those embassies in the countries of the West and other participants in the anti-Iraqi coalition have been ordered to execute "Plan Z"—to coordinate Iraqi agents' subversive and terrorist actions against those states. [passage omitted].

Iraqi Official Denies Reports

PM2401155391 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 25 Jan 91 p 3

[Interview with Ghalib al-Tamimi, press attache at the Iraqi Embassy in Moscow, by Aleksandr Oskin on 24 January: "Sensation or Fabrication?"]

[Text] On 24 January, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA published a report by A. Shumilin, that Iraqi embassies in Western and other countries belonging to the anti-Saddam coalition had been given the order to carry out "Plan Z"—to coordinate their agents' subversive and terrorist actions against those states. Bearing in mind the full gravity of this report, we telephoned the Iraqi Embassy in Moscow and asked for a comment on this sensational news.

Ghalib al-Tamimi, the embassy's press attache, resolutely rejected the report. "A. Shumilin's report," he stated, "is totally divorced from reality. The Iraqi Embassy in Moscow has received no such instructions." The press attache added that reports of this kind in the Soviet press "are formed by circles hostile to Iraq, and are published at the behest of imperialist forces."

[Oskin] What can you tell us about the course of the military operations in the Persian Gulf zone?

"U.S. troops and their allies are continuing the criminal aggression against the Iraqi people," G. Al-Tamimi replied. "There have been civilian casualties and deaths. Residential districts, hospitals, civilian installations, mosques, and churches have been bombed. World public opinion is being deceived by false information about tremendous losses by the Iraqi Army and allegedly very insignificant U.S. losses. The embassy does not yet have specific information about combat operations in the past 24 hours.

[Oskin] How could the war in the Persian Gulf be stopped?

[Al-Tamini] The United States and its allies must immediately end the aggression and withdraw their troops from the region. The entire Arab world must be left in peace. The conflict between Iraq and Kuwait is an internal matter for Arabs and we must settle it ourselves.

Furthermore, the entire situation in the Persian Gulf cannot be separated from the Palestinian and Lebanese problem.

The conversation with the press attache was brief. The Iraqi diplomat's replies revealed a frank sense of grievance against the Soviet press for an "unfriendly and biased" attitude toward his country. It must be stated with regret that the Iraqi diplomat's ideas on ways to end the war (just as on the character of Soviet press articles) are sadly far from actuality and realism.

Reports View UN Efforts on War in Gulf

Efforts Continue, 'Marginalized'

PM2501094991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 Jan 91 Second Edition p 4

[Report by correspondent V. Linnik under the general heading "Persian Gulf: Business Is Business": "Diplomacy's Turn"]

[Text] New York, 24 Jan—With the guns blazing and the bombs exploding in the Gulf one simple fact seems to have been forgotten: Nominally the United States and its partners in the anti-Iraqi coalition are acting in accordance with a UN Security Council mandate. Yet the United Nations itself has been somewhat marginalized, overshadowed by the dramatic events in the direct military theater.

This, incidentally, does not mean that the diplomatic effort at the United Nations has tailed off.

During preliminary consultations there has been discussion of a number of initiatives from certain countries aimed at halting the escalation of the conflict and finding ways for a diplomatic settlement. India, in particular, has proposed a four-day cease-fire in the Gulf. Malta has proposed convening an emergency UN General Assembly session to examine the situation on the Arabian peninsula. So far these ideas have not received any practical development. There are various reasons for this: Iraq's opposition to any hint in these initiatives that it should withdraw its troops from Kuwait played a part, as did the resolute U.S. refusal to discuss anything against that background. Nonetheless, yesterday Security Council members agreed to hold a consultative conference at which the proposal from five African countries (Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Morocco, and Mauritania) that ways be sought to settle the conflict would be examined.

The essence of the initiative is to send a pan-Arab or UN force into Kuwait to monitor the process of an Iraqi troop withdrawal from that country. "The United Nations is an organization of peace, not of war. The Security Council should not lose sight of that," the Yemeni representative noted in this connection.

Mediation Still Needed

91UN0363A Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Jan 91 Union Edition p 4

[Article by IZVESTIYA special correspondent A. Shalnev: "The United Nations: Has Everything Been Done?"]

New York—In the words of Perez de Cuellar, the present moment is not a time for diplomacy. "There is not much I can do," is the comment that the UN general secretary made on Thursday—the first day of the war in the Persian Gulf.

If one thinks about it, a paradoxical situation has set in: The United Nations organization, which was created as a mechanism for guaranteeing and maintaining peace, performs now, in fact, in the role of bystander, an impartial observer of how the war is unfolding, which—with Iraq's delivery of missile strikes on Israel—has already spilled over the boundaries of the Persian Gulf and may, it is not ruled out, spread farther in the Middle East.

The first day of the war passed in the skyscraper on the East River as if there was no war. There were some discussions in the lobbies, but not more than this. The Security Council did not convene, and nobody, as far as I know, even made an effort to convene it, realizing, probably, that Washington would block this idea. But, nonetheless, an attempt could have been made: Because of all the UN departments and subdivisions only the Security Council is given the authority to obligate the parties to cease fire.

The present inactivity, in my opinion, sharply contrasts with the way the Security Council has acted from the time of Iraq's treacherous invasion of Kuwait. One resolution after another was adopted, and, overall, 12 were adopted. The last, the twelfth, was the one with which the international community permitted the employment of force against the Baghdad regime.

Now this force is being used while encountering, understandably, opposition, which will end with still unknown consequences. It is not only a question of military resistance. Referring to estimates of intelligence sources, the newspaper THE WALL STREET JOURNAL warns that Iraq can let loose "a truly nightmarish weapon—cover the entire northern part of the Persian Gulf with millions of gallons of petroleum products from three Iraqi tankers standing in Kuwaiti ports, or from the gigantic storage tanks on the shore, and, after everything is covered, set it on fire."

It seems to me that the aforementioned is the main reason for the United Nations organization to do everything—even the most inconceivable—to prevent an escalation of the conflict in the Middle East. Alas, this is not happening. In addition, I have the impression that, even during the months that preceded the outbreak of war, the United Nations limited its role in fact to the adoption of resolutions at a time when intermediary diplomatic efforts would have been far more important at the most diverse levels, and in the most diverse versions, including more intensive mediation efforts by the general secretary.

It seems to me that this fact—insufficiently high mediation activity by the UN—will not be without its consequences, no matter how and when the armed conflict ends in the Persian Gulf.

Assessments, Evaluations Continue on Gulf War

Impact Viewed

91UF0372A Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian No 3, 23 Jan 91 p 1

[Report by LITERATURNAYA GAZETA correspondent: "Firestorm in the Desert—the War To Free Kuwait Continues"]

[Text]

New York

War has come to the United States with news of the first pilots lost and not having returned to base. Three have been taken prisoner. We are seeing their portraits on the television screens and are being told about their children and their wives. The authorities warn about the danger of terrorist actions in the United States as more then real. My papers were carefully checked at the entrance of a New York airport terminal, which has never happened before. Oil-storage facilities and major plants, military bases, nuclear power stations, and stadiums are being cited as among the main targets which could be chosen by terrorists. For the first time in many years the Pentagon has announced that it is using blood supplies collected by civilian services.

On day two of the operation the President told the leaders of Congress and cabinet members that euphoria was inappropriate at this time and that "many difficult days and nights of war with Iraq lie ahead." The first results of this war are being evaluated in Washington "with guarded optimism."

The most modern weapons, developed, as THE NEW YORK TIMES writes, "for war against the Soviet Union," are being employed in the combat operations currently under way. On television I have seen a missile silo show up in the crosshairs of the sights of an American bomber. There followed the firing of a missile and an accurate hit on the ground target. New types of bombs are destroying airfields runways and igniting atmospheric oxygen—everything living in the zone of the explosion dies.

The majority of experts believe that the first stage of war will be over only with the destruction of Iraq's missile launchers. The next mission will be the disabling of the "Republican Guard"—Saddam Husayn's crack forces—and also the armored units. This will be done mainly by B-52 bombers with their experience of "carpet" bombing, acquired in Vietnam. Only at the finale of "Desert Storm" will the marines and other units join the action.

[Signed] Edgar Cheporov

London

How do the British view the war? As a tragic, but inevitable course of events, on the whole. All members of legislature have laid aside their customary skirmishing, and the opposition and the governing party, "backbenchers" and members of the cabinet—all solidly support the government. For the first time since her resignation M. Thatcher put out a statement calling for the defeat of Saddam Husayn "to, first, liberate Kuwait and, second, show the world that any such dictator will be punished." According to the results of a recent opinion poll, 75 percent of the inhabitants of the British Isles approve of the military operations, and only 12 percent condemn them.

Some people are worried primarily about the consequences of the war for Britain itself. There will be a shortage of hospital beds, gasoline prices will rise steeply and, perhaps, disappear from sale altogether, the country will be engulfed in a wave of terrorism.... The threats—the latter particularly—are real. For this reason London's Heathrow is now reminiscent more of a military base than an airport—tanks, soldiers, police. For this reason the authorities have suggested that almost all Iraqis leave Britain.

[Signed] Mikhail Ozerov

Paris

The neighborhoods housing the residences of the president and the premier, other government establishments, and embassies are ringed with reinforced police details. Patrols have been mounted at the stations of Paris and in the major stores and crowded underground walkways. The French are afraid of acts of terrorism—they fear a repetition of the bloody series of explosions carried out by Arab terrorists in 1986. The Interior Ministry has prepared a special program resoundingly called "Lookout." Cars parked in the area of the Champs Elysees are checked over by mine detectors.

A telephone line through which relatives of French soldiers and officers taking part in the war may learn about their sons and husbands is in operation.

The salvo of Soviet-made "surface-to-surface" missiles aimed at Israel, which prior to this had not entered the war, was seen by the French as a crude attempt by Saddam Husayn to impart a global nature to the conflict.

[Signed] Kirill Privalov

Damascus

Forecasts that the war would last three or four days have proven wrong.

In the opinion of a number of Arab leaders, the war in the Gulf is only at the initial stage and will be protracted. "The Americans may dominate Iraq's air space, but not the will of its people," 'Ali Abu-Nuwar, former commander of Jordan's Armed Forces, said. "The United States is rejoicing too soon. Let us see what it says when its soldiers encounter Iraqis in a land battle. Behind the Iraqis are more than 200 million Arabs, who will fight until not a trace of the United States and Israel remains in the region."

With every day of the war Saddam's Army becomes weaker, but his supporters are becoming increasingly active. As expected, their number increased markedly after the Baghdad leader played the "Israel card," firing missiles against Israel which exploded in residential neighborhoods of Tel Aviv and Haifa. The anger of the United States and its Western allies was as great as the delight of the Arabs supporting Husayn. "Saddam has kept his promise!" the Palestinian camps rejoiced. Calling Saddam's missiles Islamic retribution, some Muslim figures have issued a call to the Arabs to put all their resources at Baghdad's disposal and punish not only the United States and Israel but also the "Arab regimes which have sold out."

[Signed] Sergey Medvedko

Gulf Stance Defended

91UF0371A Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian No 3, 23 Jan 91 p 1

["Chief editor's column" by F. Burlatskiy, people's deputy of the USSR: "Cruel Lesson for Dictatorship"]

[Text] Any war is an evil for the peoples. Both for the people who are the victims of aggression and for the people who are forced to be the aggressor. We feel pain and sorrow for the Kuwaitis and, of course, do not deprive the Iraqis of our sympathy either.

But there is in the world something more dreadful than war. This is dictatorship. It contains brutality as a snake contains a venomous fang. Can a cobra be persuaded not to hurl itself against man? Is it possible to teach a dictator humanity within or outside a country?

Avoidance of a war at any price—this was the thinking of many people in Europe, America, and in our country. But what would have happened tomorrow if Saddam Husayn had created nuclear weapons? The reader will remember, perhaps, that in Stanley Kramer's movie "On the Beach" World War III starts in the Near East. Some state of this region, as a provocation, dropped an atom bomb on a great power. A salvo against the other great power followed automatically—and all mankind perished.

For six months the world community had tried to appease the aggressor. For six months the shadow of Munich hovered over the heads of mankind. But had it not been for Munich, there might not have been the fascist attack on Poland on 1 September 1939 or Pearl Harbor. Policy means a capacity for seeing ahead. For this reason emotions are the worst counselor in policy. They express only the feelings of the present day or present moment even. Consequently, a small war is sometimes a lesser evil if it averts a big or even world conflagration.

I believe that in adopting the decision on the use of force the United Nations was guided by an endeavor to punish the aggressor in good time and considered the possible development of events in the future. Chemical, bacteriological, and nuclear weapons are crawling over the globe. All the great powers without exception are to blame for this. Ourselves included. These weapons are falling into the hands of irresponsible dictators, adventurers, and fanatics. This means that we are with common efforts forging our own perdition. A principal lesson of the present tragedy is this: halting arms sales. Benefits from the latter are increasingly dubious, incidentally. Iraq owes us $10 billion for arms supplies, which at the going rate is the equivalent of 200 billion rubles [R]. With this money we could feed the whole population of the country for many months. So is it that profitable to manufacture weapons for sale? Under the aegis of the United Nations the great powers should sit at the negotiating table in order to solve this problem once and for all. We should be arming no one—neither friends nor foes nor, even more, dictators.

There are lessons that apply merely to our country and our policy. I remember well how all this began. A Soviet delegation headed by D.T. Shepilov had returned from the Near East in 1956. I was listening to Shepilov's speech to employees of the party and state apparatus. He proposed a reconsideration of our evaluations of many regimes in the Near East, particularly in Egypt, which prior to this had been considered dictatorial and even semifascist. So it is to him that there belongs the dubious honor of the conferment on these and other countries in Africa of the socialist orientation "title." This despite the fact that the communists and other representatives of forces of the left, not to mention democratic movements, were being tortured, languishing in prison, and being executed. The apotheosis of this policy in the 1960's was our assistance to Egypt in the building of the Aswan High Dam and also arms supplies, which cost more than $4.5 billion. Our smart people did not allow themselves to be deluded. It was they who at that time thought up the ditty: "The hero of the Soviet Union lies in the sun, warming his belly."

Why do I remember this today? I was deeply distressed by many of the questions that were put to A.A. Bessmertnykh, the new USSR foreign minister, during his appearances both in the Supreme Soviet and at the meeting of the Presidium of the highest organ of power. I was put on my guard particularly by the calls of the colonel deputies.

They had an unambivalent ring. None of them spoke in defense of the UN resolution and the policy of the world community, which is supported by the USSR. They even demanded the adoption of a special declaration on noninterference in affairs in the Persian Gulf with the clear purpose of somehow "correcting" our foreign policy.

They alluded to the experience of Afghanistan here. Two arguments were put forward. The first: U.S. President G. Bush had requested authority for military operations against Iraq from Congress. Therefore, allegedly, the president of the USSR also should obtain authority from the USSR Supreme Soviet. But there is no basis for this approach. No one has ever raised the issue of our participation in the war in the Persian Gulf, and, naturally, the president of the USSR has never requested any such authority.

The second argument—the analogy with Afghanistan—is even less well-founded. It is based on the ingenuous incompetence of the audience. Who promised an easy victory in Afghanistan in a few weeks? It was Marshal D.F. Ustinov. Three CPSU Central Committee Politburo members—Yu.V. Andropov, A.A. Gromyko and, D.F. Ustinov—were entrusted with preparing proposals pertaining to Afghanistan. The Army, of course, had the main say—it was for waging war. How this ended, everyone knows. It is still hard to say at this time under the influence of which forces a change in our policy in the Near East was made at the end of the 1950's. What played the greater part—ideological or military-political motives. But of one thing there is no doubt: The policy of new thinking has brought us back into the world community.

Together with all civilized countries and the United Nations we have embarked on the path of defense of the principles of the world order and the standards of international law. Particular significance is attached to the fact that the Persian Gulf has become the first test of crisis settlement following the end of the "cold war." All countries have passed this test. The Soviet Union has not allowed itself to be driven into isolation and once again to take the part of dictatorial regimes.

Of course, the problem of a Near East settlement remains acute. But it is at this time that the prerequisites for it—the most propitious since the war—are being created. It is sufficient to say that a group of Arab states adopted a decision on the dispatch to Saudi Arabia of an inter-Arab force for defense against possible aggression on the part of Iraq. Even now Iraq still has a chance to take part in this settlement. For this it is necessary that it announce and begin a withdrawal of its forces from Kuwait. This would be followed immediately by a ceasefire and then the commencement of effective negotiations on a Near East settlement.

There is one further—quite painful—aspect to the problem. In 1967, following Egypt's defeat in the lightning war in the Near East, N.G. Yegorychev, at that time first secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee, raised at a plenum of the CPSU Central Committee the question of the quality of our arms and the Army's entire military-strategic training. I consider it appropriate to return now to this question in the light of the recent events. In this connection I, as a people's deputy of the USSR and member of the USSR Supreme Soviet International Affairs Committee, address an inquiry to USSR Defense Minister D.T. Yazov. We are spending R96 billion of the sparse Union budget of R276 on military needs. How effectively are these outlays and our entire military strategy securing a qualitatively high level of the Soviet Union's defense capability? It would be expedient, I believe, to hear an answer to this question and the findings of experts initially at a joint closed session of the USSR Supreme Soviet International Affairs Committee and the Committee for Defense and State Security and then, if necessary, at the next session of the highest organ of our state power.

Consequences Viewed

LD2401162691

[Editorial Report] Moscow Domestic Service in Russian at 1230 GMT on 24 January carries a 30-minute "Point of View" program presented by Viktor Levin, All-Union Radio commentator; with political observer Nikolay Vladimirovich Shishlin.

Shishlin answers Levin's question about what the first few days of the war in the Gulf show: I am not a military specialist, says Shislin, but the first assessments that Iraq has sustained great damage are true. On the other hand, Iraq's military potential can not be destroyed overnight. "All in all, if the first week is anything to go by, it seems to me that Iraq is doomed."

Levin asks Shishlin about the political dimensions of the war from the point of view of Iraqi Scud attacks on Israel. The Iraqi ruler wants to involve Israel in the war, says Levin, to destroy the international coalition and mobilize Muslims everywhere. How long can Israel exercise restraint?

Shishlin replies that what Iraq is now doing to Israel is banditry. Israel has its own policy. It is the strongest military power in the area. It can respond to attacks and knows how to do it. For political reasons, however, Tel Aviv has so far exercised self-control. The United States, the USSR, and the EC are trying to ensure that Israel does not get involved. Iraq is doomed anyway. The Iraqi ruler is not concerned about anything at all, other than his own political fate. The week that has just started—the second week of the war—will be decisive for the outcome of the conflict and for Israel's position.

Levin then asks Shishlin about the PLO's attitude toward the conflict. The PLO has stated that it backs Iraq.

Shishlin says that Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria have said they will stay in the coalition even if Israel makes use of its legitimate right of self-defense. "As for the PLO position, I think that it was a most serious political mistake for the PLO leadership to have made when it showed unconditional solidarity with the predatory actions of the Baghdad regime which has annexed Kuwait. Of course the Palestinians will have to pay and pay for this political mistake. One must look ahead a bit. This conflict, its whole drama and tragedy notwithstanding—and the extent of the ruinous consequences of this conflict is still far from obvious—in one way or another this conflict will, of course, alter the entire correlation of the political forces in the Near East zone. In this case, of course, in this new correlation of political forces, the entire Palestinian cause is being very seriously damaged by the Palestinians' current position."

Levin asks about the general situation in the Near East and possible link. Some say there should be no link. Others disagree, saying we can have no double standards here. If UN resolutions are binding on Iraq they are likewise binding on Israel, like Resolution 242. This will emerge as the foremost task later on and the PLO has made it more complicated.

Shishlin agrees and says any link here is perfectly untenable as an approach. He says that we ought to be clear that in the first place all 12 UN resolutions should be fulfilled and complied with. Iraq must get out of Kuwait. "Now, on the Palestinian cause, I think that the position of the PLO leadership—something we have already stated and I merely wish to reiterate your views—this position does of course complicate to a certain degree the political efforts to resolve this problem which has indeed come to a head, a problem that is indeed a legitimate one. It is indeed essential to satisfy the national aspirations of the Palestinians but this approach by the PLO and 'Arafat, Yasir 'Arafat, does of course compel one to, at the very least, doubt whether the current PLO leadership is going to be a completely reasonable partner in the political efforts to settle the Near East problem. It is a very serious problem."

The United States has already engaged in talks with the PLO in Tunis some time ago. Now the future of the talks is in jeopardy due to the PLO's stand.

Shishlin introduces a new dimension here: The international arms trade. Once the aggressor has been punished, what next? It is known that Iraq has Soviet, French, and Chinese missiles. All the countries in the region have weapons from all over the place aplenty. We must deal with this problem, we must tackle it, we must solve it. The end of the cold war does not mean that international arms sales competition has also come to an end. In 1991 we must solve this problem for the sake of peace.

Levin asks Shishlin for his views on the USSR's position on the Gulf conflict. We know Gorbachev sent messages to Saddam twice to the effect that if Saddam announces his withdrawal or the commencement of his withdrawal then the Soviet Union will do everything to stop the war. Saddam said that Bush started the aggression, let it be Bush who stops it. But we continue our peace efforts. Is there a possibility of stopping the war on the basis of a sensible compromise?

Shishlin says: "What you say would have been logical and even, in all probability, moral. But now I think the voice of compromise, the voice of politics, is being drowned by exploding bombs and exploding missiles. It seems to me that for as long missiles and bombs and other things have not had their final say, it is not very probable to hope that this conflict will come to an end—all the more so because we now have a sufficiently clear image of what Saddam Husayn represents as a politician.

In my view, he is a man who has already made his choice—a choice dictated by the interests of his personal power, his personal dictatorship. For him the preservation of his personal dictatorship represents the price he will pay to obtain for any decision. Of course, no one will pay him his price and I think that it goes without saying that the continuation of this harsh and bloody line Baghdad has embarked on—this line in itself closes off more and more opportunities of finding what you have termed a sensible compromise. That is why it seems to me that efforts must be made.

How is one to know? Maybe suddenly some chance will be discovered? On the other hand, appraising the prospects for developments in this conflict in a realistic manner, one must see that what is currently at stake is a military solution and only a military solution and it is only after the military solution has been reached that it will be possible to think of a political solution."

Levin says the war is being waged in a most explosive region. This gives rise to a lot of fears. Can the conflict turn into a third world war?

Shishlin says that as far as possible consequences of the conflict are concerned, Turkey is already involved. Consequently, Soviet troops have been put on alert in the region. Kuwaiti oil fields are ablaze. This is a calamity for the region and the ecological balance. Shishlin says that the world community's balanced position and Soviet support for the UN resolutions are, perhaps, the best guarantee that the conflict will not, after all, escalate further. The war will have its consequences for the world economy and the USSR will suffer its share. The emergence of any conflict in the world has negative consequences for everyone. I am confident we will avoid the worst but we will have to bear adverse consequences for some time to come.

Restraint Recommended

*PM2401120591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
24 Jan 91 Union Edition p 4*

[Commentary by Yu. Vladimirov "International Commentary": "Ends and Means"]

[Text] The armed conflict in the Persian Gulf—like the recent wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan—has once again placed on the agenda the question of the means and ends of war and the observance of norms of international law by the opposing sides.

At first sight the parallel with the unjust wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan is quite inappropriate. Are the United States and other participants in the anti-Iraqi coalition not supported by decisions of the UN Security Council sanctioning the use of force against the aggressor? Are they not aiming to restore violated justice and liberate a tiny country annexed by a neighbor armed to the teeth?

Undoubtedly the culprit in the tragedy being played out before the whole world is the Iraqi regime. The fact is that by delivering missile strikes on peaceful installations in Israel, which is not participating in the war, Baghdad is violating international law and acting in defiance of the humanitarian principles in the Geneva Conventions on the protection of the civilian population in time of war.

That is the way it all is. But if the enemy balks at nothing, does this mean that the United States and its allies are freed from the obligation of displaying reasonable restraint and restricting the scale of their operations within frameworks that eliminate pointless casualties among the Iraqi civilians? Particularly since, naturally, Saddam Husayn did not bother to ask their opinion when he started his venture in Kuwait.

The truth is that both sides in the conflict have a duty to scrupulously observe the rules of war determined in international laws. This is to be expected particularly of international forces because they have a moral superiority over the regime that carried out the aggression.

Meanwhile a number of questions arise. What are the consequences of the air attacks on Iraqi nuclear installations? The desire to deprive Saddam Husayn of the possibility of getting hold of a nuclear bomb is understandable, although that is a question of the distant future. Is the risk involved in destroying the reactors not too great? Alas, it cannot be ruled out that, as a result of these bombings, the population in the area will face to the threat of radioactive contamination. Another aspect: Strikes have been made on chemical enterprises, including some in the suburbs of Baghdad. Poisonous black smoke rose above the Iraqi capital for a long time. It is easy to guess the effect of this destruction on people and on the environment.

When the time comes to sum up the conflict, the following fundamental questions will arise: How many human lives were thrown on the altar of victory, and did the allies in the anti-Iraqi coalition not overstep the mark beyond which the aim of war stops being justified by the means used?

What about us? Did Moscow act correctly in directing its efforts exclusively to a peaceful settlement to the crisis? I believe that it did. This is not just a question of the lessons of Afghanistan or the fact that, in its present situation, the USSR is in no position to afford the luxury of sending soldiers to fight outside its borders. The main point is that we can perform a far more valuable service to the international community by continuing to play the role of mediator, aiming for a settlement by political means. It is not our fault if Baghdad is still unwilling to listen to the voice of reason.

West Europe

Reports Note Europe Community's Stance on Aid

Aid Talks' Delay Explained

PM2401131991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 24 Jan 91 Union Edition p 1

[INTERFAX report: "EC-USSR Session Postponed"]

[Text] The EC commission has decided to postpone the extraordinary session of the USSR-EC joint commission scheduled for 24 January. INTERFAX was told at the USSR Foreign Ministry that the Soviet delegation's trip to Brussels has been postponed indefinitely.

A spokesman for the Soviet Foreign Ministry who wished to remain anonymous announced that the session's deferment is connected with events in the Baltic and that "it was to be expected." In Brussels there was to have been a discussion in particular of food aid to the Soviet Union, technical assistance for creating the market infrastructure, and the preparation of a new agreement between the USSR and the EEC.

Resolution Condemns Army's Actions

LD2401172291 Moscow TASS in English 1710 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Krivykh]

[Text] Strasbourg January 24 TASS—Deputies of the European legislature, assembled here for a regular session, today approved a resolution on the situation in the Baltic republics.

The resolution, in part, condemns "the Soviet Army's interference" in Lithuania and Latvia, which, deputies think, "represents a violation of international law and the Helsinki agreements" and is also at odds with the draft of a new Union treaty proposed by the Soviet leadership.

Up until the last moment, representatives of legislative groups could not agree on the final version of this document. Most groups submitted their drafts several days before the session. The largest group of deputies—socialists—presented their text only a few hours before the vote, however.

Observers, commenting on the session proceedings, think that socialists appeared to be the "softest" and closest to the opinion of the European Community leaders who take a relatively moderate position towards events in Lithuania and Latvia as compared, for example, to right-wing members of the European legislative.

Nevertheless, the legislature ultimately approved a resolution proposed by right-wingers. Socialists, too, voted in its favour. Two hundred and fifty-seven deputies, who took part in the ballot, voted in favour of the resolution, nine against and four abstained.

The resolution says that the European legislature supports the European Community's leaders, who reserve for themselves the right to revise the programme of financial and technical aid to the Soviet Union, if the situation in the Baltic or other Soviet republics deteriorates.

Deputies approved the decision of the commission of the European communities temporarily to postpone a session of the mixed commission on cooperation between the European Community and the Soviet Union.

At the same time, however, the resolution points to the need to continue the delivery of food aid and medicines to the Soviet people.

Parliamentarians also think that the commission of the European communities should also respond positively to the requests for this aid from the governments of the Baltic republics.

After a brief, heated discussion, the resolution was quickly endorsed because deputies' attention is now riveted on the gulf situation. The document will be conveyed to the leaders of the USSR and the Baltic republics.

Deputies urged Soviet authorities to forge a dialogue with the Baltic republics. They also decided to hold at forthcoming sessions of the European Parliament additional meetings devoted to the situation in the Soviet Baltic republics and in the Gulf.

Italian Said Making 'Dummy' Targets for Iraq

PM2501094591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 Jan 91 Second Edition p 4

[Report by correspondent N. Miroshnik under the general heading "Persian Gulf: Business Is Business"]

[Text] Rome, 24 Jan—M. Moselli became famous overnight, immediately after Washington announced that Saddam Husayn had set up dummy models of military hardware for bombs to hit.

It turns out that the Italian firm MVM enjoys a world monopoly in the industrial production of such models. Admittedly, its owner swears that he never did any business with Iraq and, in particular, never manufactured any "Scud" missile installations. He displayed his colorful catalog in confirmation of that.

There is a large choice in it: the U.S. M-60 tank, the British Chieftain tank, and Phantom fighter-bombers. All the external details have been copied and all are life-size. They are easy to dismantle and lightweight—the main material used is fiberglass.

At first glance an ordinary customer might find the "toys" produced in Turin rather expensive—they cost $30,000-40,000 each. But if you compare that with the tens of millions that a modern fighter costs, for instance....

M. Moselli claims that there is only one other firm in the world—a British firm—that specializes in military models. But its equipment is inflatable and made out of rubber, which is convenient for storage and transportation but, obviously, does not look as natural.

Currently M. Mozelli is swearing that he had nothing to do with it: Making the models is not difficult and, consequently, Iraq has probably started producing them itself. Although he admits that in principle it was in Baghdad that the modern history of the MVM firm began. Previously it had manufactured ordinary plastic suitcases without much success. But when Moselli took some to Iraq in 1982, the military unexpectedly said: Good luck with the suitcases, but if you could replace our plywood target silhouettes....

Since then the firm's turnover has grown to $10 million. But it is very hard to check whether the firm supplied other items to Iraq after the flat targets: Unlike the originals, plastic copies require no export licenses. Admittedly, my Italian colleagues were able to dig something up: Seven years ago Moselli admitted to the West German weekly STERN that he numbered "all the Gulf states" among his clients.

Political & Social

Gorbachev Stance on Iraq, Baltics Contrasted

91UF0364A Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian No 3, 23 Jan 91 p 4

[Article by Vladimir Tsvetov: "Death Is Horrible Everywhere"]

[Text] On the night of 16-17 January, the USSR president did not sleep. He made the last, perhaps, most desperate, attempt to resolve the Middle Eastern crisis by peaceful means. The president never got away from the phone: Calls were made to Washington, Baghdad, and European and Asian capitals. Unfortunately, the efforts of the president were in vain. Bloodshed began.

By all signs, on the night of 12-13 January the president rested quite peacefully. At any rate, V. Landsbergis did not manage to reach him by phone from Vilnius. The president learned about the bloodshed in Lithuania when 13 corpses were delivered to a Vilnius mortuary, and more than 100 wounded were taken to hospitals.

Within just several hours of a missile and bomb attack on Baghdad, the USSR president made a thought-out and well-reasoned statement. One could feel that he was intimately familiar with the situation.

The president was still complaining about the "surprise" that the events in Lithuania were for him an entire day after the bursts of automatic weapons fire rang out in Vilnius.

They say that a retinue plays the king. However, the more effectively the king influences the moves of his courtiers and their composition the more successfully the retinue plays the role. The plot of "new political thinking" is being transformed as figures in the entourage of the USSR president change. The Iraqi and Lithuanian scenes with the participation of the president and the retinue prove this. In the former scene, the president still sought a balance of interests of the opposing sides, whereas in the latter scene any balance was out of the question.

A test of the ability of the president to influence the retinue at play around him occurred in October of last year when the Army and the military-industrial complex conducted a nuclear test explosion on Novaya Zemlya on the sly. The president did not even rebuke the generals.

Subsequently, the Army and the military-industrial complex mounted an even more effective attack. An attempt to deceive our negotiating partners was made at the Vienna talks on reducing conventional armed forces in Europe. The cheaters hardly hoped that their trick would be successful, nor did they wish it to. They wanted to frustrate the talks and, consequently, stop the demilitarization of Europe. The USSR president once again failed to respond to the pirouettes of his gold-braided retinue. The latter got bolder and began to shoo offstage those who resisted the playing of a military march around the president.

Here is the latest scene chronologically—the slaughter in Vilnius. I will venture a supposition that the president's retinue of generals does not care about the fate of the Russian-speaking populace of the Baltic area to the defense of which they supposedly rose. Otherwise, what reason was there to add to the burning tangle of ethnic contradictions the dark feeling of avenging the blood spilled? The purpose was different. The West will now hardly proceed to negotiate with us about disarmament with its previous belief in our good intentions. After all, in politics you cannot have two standards, one for domestic consumption and one for external consumption.

The retinue of generals also played the president in such a manner that he appeared to be a person who does not fully control the situation in the country. If it is so, is it feasible to consider agreements associated with him viable? The retinue attached its hopes to this quite natural reasoning of foreign leaders.

The retinue did achieve certain things. Nine senators called on President Bush to consider canceling the forthcoming Soviet-American summit meeting. The head of the British foreign-policy establishment and leaders of Common Market countries said that they may discontinue food and technology aid to the Soviet Union. A representative of the Japanese Government said that reconsidering the form of support for the USSR was not ruled out. Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia decided to speed up their withdrawal from the Warsaw treaty organization.

Politicians, including those in the Army, are driven by interests rather than feelings. The retinue intends to play the president further so that he will bring the country back to the condition when almost half the state budget may once again be spent on the Army and the military-industrial complex—and without supervision at that—when military enterprises will have unlimited markets for sales, when tactical, strategic, and military-technical failures will once again be concealed with impunity, and when generals and military- industrial leaders will be showered with orders, state bonuses, high salaries, and luxury cottages with military service free of charge in return for all of this.

We await the completion of hostilities in Iraq and Kuwait as soon as possible with particular impatience. One may fail to hear automatic-weapons and pistol shots in the Baltic area, in Lithuania and Latvia, through missile salvos and bombing raids against Iraqi positions. Meanwhile, they are as dangerous for us, and for the entire world, as artillery fire in the Middle East.

'Harsh Criticism' of Leadership at Moscow Rally

PM2401144391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 22 Jan 91 First Edition p 1

[Report by correspondent Captain 3d rank Ye. Volodin: "Manezh Square Rally"]

[Text] Moscow, 21 Jan—A rally organized by the Democratic Russia Coordination Council was held in Moscow's Manezh Square last Sunday. Seen as an act of solidarity with Landsbergis's Lithuania, it abounded in harsh criticism of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the Soviet Government, and the USSR president.

Chairing the rally, Yu. Afanasyev said that henceforth Democratic Russia will be in opposition to the USSR president. An address by Chairman of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet B. Yeltsin to the citizens of Russia, read out at the rally, frankly says that "in the last few days the situation in the country has been aggravated in the extreme... and tyranny and lawlessness are being restored." Although the address urges people to "act strictly within the limits of the law" and prevent "the beginning of hostility," the spirit of the message and the rally as a whole was one of extreme intolerance of different views, interpretations, and perceptions of our life.

Adhering to his professional habit of bringing accusations without proof, T. Gdlyan gave one of his usual heated speeches. Unfortunately, it was his call to replace the law with some "people's court" and his abuse of the Congress of USSR People's Deputies (in Gdlyan's opinion, it is a "corrupt congress") that prompted a "rapturous" response in the crowd.

USSR People's Deputy V. Smirnov proposed adopting an appeal to members of the Armed Forces, the KGB, and the Internal Affairs Ministry. The leitmotif of this document would be: Let us set up our own Russian Guard—we have "served a criminal regime" long enough. The appeal was adopted.

The rally resolution demands the withdrawal of "punitive" troops from the Baltic, the arrest and trial of members of the military involved in the events in Vilnius, and the resignation of the USSR president and the USSR defense minister.

Then it was A. Nevzorov's turn. A representative of the Lithuanian parliament "exposed" the journalist's bias: It seems that Nevzorov's father helped the Lithuanians in the postwar years to track down "patriots" in the forest. Well, the successors of the "forest brotherhood" should get it into their heads that not all the children and grandchildren of the Soviet soldiers who cleansed Lithuania and the whole of Europe from fascism came out that day under the slogan "Shame on the USSR Armed Forces!"

Radical Deputies Discuss Gorbachev, Own Role

PM2401164891 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No. 1, 6-13 Jan 91 p 5

[Unattributed feature: "At a Crossroads—For the Umpteenth Time"—first two paragraphs are introduction]

[text] As our readers have noticed, we have increasingly sought to use the Council of Founders, who instituted MN as an independent publication, in the capacity of experts. From our point of view, this "think tank" has been particularly successful in the genre of forecasting. Let us recall at least the forecast made on the eve of the 4th Congress of People's Deputies ("MN" No. 49)—on several occasions events were predicted by our founders with minute accuracy.

To reinforce this tradition we have again requested our founders—people's deputies of the USSR—to assess the results of the Congress and give their own forecast on the development of the political situation in the country. Their replies to our questionnaire are of interest, we believe, as a kind of social barometer.

1. Who do you think won and who lost at the Congress? In what way has this affected the "image" of the Congress?

Sergey Stankevich: The idea of authoritarian modernization emerged victorious at the Congress. The idea of finding a democratic way out of the crisis suffered defeat. Moreover, the very potential of the democratic forces was unrealized. The "image" of the Congress became even more conservative. Law and order was the most popular catchphrase during the past two weeks. Moreover, as seen by many—law and order at all costs. For democrats, however, order at the price of a GULAG archipelago is absolutely unacceptable.

Yuriy Ryzhov: The Congress itself has lost out and its "image" has paled even further.

Nikolay Shmeley: The alignment of forces at the Congress was not at all hopeful. The word "dictatorship" went into common currency. Unless negative trends in the economy are halted, this will amount to a feasible perspective. I won't try to guess how quickly this may occur, but I don't think much time is required: a soft dictatorship will pave the way towards a rigid one; at first it will be bloodless, then of necessity it will spell blood. Our Minister of Foreign Affairs is perfectly right in this respect.

Vladimir Tikhonov: In general this amounts to a loss for the democratic forces. It is the result of their lack of organization and their inability to adapt to the current mood. They have learned to speak while paying no attention to those who listen.

Yuriy Chernichenko: Hopes for democratic representation in the country have been dashed. We have ceased to be a people's assembly. We keep on giving more power to the President; we borrow it from parliament, then give it away.

Vasil Bykov: To me it's self-evident that victory went to conservative, if not to say reactionary, forces. Light has likewise been thrown on a decline in the democrats' parliamentary activity and on their retreat. This also determined the image of the Congress, which set out on the beaten track of supporting and approving apparat decisions.

Yuriy Karyakin: The right-wingers won. The "image" of the Congress is at its lowest.

Gennadiy Lisichkin: The Congress disappointed not only us, but even people far removed from politics. The range of questions it examined was too academic, divorced from real life.

Nikolay Petrakov: A marked feature of the Congress was confrontation, first among the Republics and secondly, between the Republics and the Centre. some of the decisions taken at the Congress are almost suprarepublican, which is why it is unclear whether the Republics agree with them and intend to carry them out. In these decisions the Congress lost, so it seems to me. But it won in those cases when it sought for accord among the Republics, drawing on understanding between them.

Gavriil Popov: Yet again victory went to those who have ruled the country since 1917 and who have been in charge of perestroika since 1985. That is, the upper strata of the apparat who exercise the country's centralized administration. However, as before, this leadership lacks a viable constructive programme. [Popov ends]

The democratic forces lost—our founders agree on this. But even the Congress itself stood to lose. It did not assume responsibility for any decision, nor did it adopt a programme of measures to combat the crisis. Instead it once again demonstrated its readiness to give all power to the President.

It looks as if the congress also has depleted potential as a representative body of authority. The interests of the minority in it are not protected either by the voting procedure or the time-limit regulations. This renders any discussion meaningless, since it is possible to predict the likely outcome well in advance. But it will hardly become the last congress of people's deputies—its passivity doesn't hinder the authoritarian system and creates a semblance of the idea of people's soverignty.

2. Do you think Mikahil Gorbachev has some idea about how to deal with the crisis? What does the President mean by "unpopular measures"?

Sergey Stankevich: I think he has, but it is limited and rather stereotyped. The problem is that the President has no team. Those who could have formed its core are being made Gorbachev's victims. I have in mind his close aides, those who think alike at all levels of government. This, I think, is the weakest aspect of today's presidency. The "unpopular measures" are first and foremost monetary reform. It could have been avoided a few months ago, but not now. Quite probably, when the President speaks about "unpopular measures", he has in mind the Centre's tougher line with respect to the republics. The "unpopular measures" I would like to see on the part of the President are radical land reform, development of entrepreneurship, the granting of power to local governments.

Yuriy Ryzhov: I think Gorbachev's ideas to deal with the crisis boil down to the introduction of emergency forms of presidential rule in individual areas or even on a broader scale. Use of force is not ruled out.

Yuriy Chernichenko: He had two trump cards: land as the basis of changing the system, and money as the basis of bringing people together of their own accord, as the basis for healing the economy. The former is now held by Yeltsin. Yeltsin can't take the latter card because Russia is part of the country and money is its life blood. In 1921, when they saw that brute force no longer worked, they made the money convertible. I think that Gorbachev's key measure to deal with the crisis is a monetary reform, in whatever form, to prevent runaway inflation.

Vasil Bykov: If he does have such ideas, the President keeps them secret. In fact he has not proposed any really radical ideas to pull us out of the crisis. What he had insisted on and achieved is a referendum on private ownership of land and amendments to the Constitution. These can hardly turn the situation around. The idea of strong power has always been present in our life. And look at the result....

Vladimir Tikhonov: The President makes decisions based only on today's situation, as seen through the eyes of a narrow circle of people. This does not reflect the depth of the social processes at work. Without going into these processes in detail, the President believes they are in the evil deeds of some forces of destruction. At the same time, his only support in recent years came from the democratic forces which he wants to drive into a corner today.

What he implies by "unpopular measures" are the outrageous taxes being currently enforced and which are choking free enterprise. Also the moratorium on strikes. Strikes aren't extreme measures. Extreme measures will start when a policy of coercion is enforced.

Nikolay Shmeleyev: I wouldn't try to guess as what the President means by "unpopular measures". Gorbachev is a career politician and whether his ideas are good or bad, they are his own. He aims at minimizing the threat of the USSR's disintegration, and at restoring the power structures at all levels because there is a pervasive paralysis of power. I agree that we have turned our local governments into inept and amorphous discussion clubs. I'm not sure that the President's cabinet form of government is any better. It is not totally clear why there should be a prime minister. As an economist, I'm greatly annoyed that no necessary urgent anti-crisis measures are in the offing. I didn't hear any answer to the question about freedom of entrepreneurship in the country, or about what is to become of the budget deficit, market prices, or the mountain of money that chases goods.

Gennadiy Lischkin: Gorbachev seems to voice lots of anti-crisis ideas. But decrees he signs (at least on economic matters) only deepen the crisis. His programme statements are not being implemented.

As regards "unpopular measures", I see a number of them as necessary. First, to stop paying for useless work. Why should society subsidize factories making TV sets which catch fire, or collective farms which grow almost nothing? Why pay bunglers? There are currently too many "unpopular measures" that only encourage those who don't want to work.

Gavriil Popov: The President has some ideas to meet the crisis. But they wouldn't work. I don't know which "unpopular measures" Gorbachev has in mind. I think those being taken are worse than unpopular.

Yuriy Karyakin: I think the President has exhausted his stock of ideas. If Gorbachev fails to come up with new ideas soon, his cause will be lost. Given his lack of frankness today (this wasn't the case in the past), it is very hard to answer the question about "unpopular measures". The most unpopular thing I think is the incipient rift between the President and the intellectuals. He no longer has their moral support.

Nikolay Petrakov: Ideas to meet the crisis are seen in all the programmes, even in the government programme. On the whole, they coincide with the ideas of the IMF. The trouble is these ideas are not being implemented.

"Unpopular measures" is a relative notion. Unpopular with whom? Popular with whom? The idea to increase pensions by printing money is popular, but who stands to gain? Not the pensioners, who sees that he gains nothing six months from now. [Petrakov ends]

The survey shows that the experts can only guess at what the President implies by his ideas to meet the crisis and "unpopular measures". One thing is obvious: that Gorbachev has concentrated on bringing in strong executive authority. It is not clear which ideas called for such authority.

The experts on the whole agree that the economy can't be resuscitated without "unpopular measures" with the provision that these measures are unpopular with those who think in traditional egalitarian terms, top bureaucrats and the administrative system, which is alive and kicking.

3. What should democrats do in the current situation?

Sergey Stankevich: Democrats must finally realize that authoritarian rule is bad, but absence of power is even worse. Hence, they have to support stronger executive power, though with certain conditions. What I mean is an explicit presidential programme, a system of democratic counterbalances, primarily, a stronger control function for parliament.

Yuriy Chernichenko: There is a rule; tell the truth and you won't have to remember what you said before. We should try to be scrupulously honest and not to play any games. After all, the elections we've had won't be the last in the country. We have to be honest to the very end and say only what we think.

Yuriy Ryzhov: Democrats should not encourage the reshuffle we're witnessing in the structures of power. It's already produced some appalling results, and the latest amendments to the Constitution are giving it a new impetus.

Vladimir Tikhonov: If we want our reforms to succeed, democratic movements have to become well organized politically. Second, there should be constant pressure from below on parliaments and governments in the republics. We need a strong opposition.

Gennadiy Lisichkin: Once democrats agreed to enter the bodies of power, they had to accept the existing rules. But one can't fill up a bottomless pit. I think we first have to change the rules and only then start the game. This is precisely what we should do now; consolidate all those forces which are capable of carrying this through.

Vasil Bykov: They have to stick up for their democratic positions, without any hesitation or deviation. Any faltering is seized upon by the conservatives.

Nikolay Petrakov: Democrats have to overcome the inferiority complex which emerged because our freedom wasn't won, but given to us from above. It's as if we've lost our political bearings. Democrats fear that freedom will be taken away from us by the man who gave it to us. Yet I'm convinced that Gorbachev will remain true to democratic principles. The threat actually comes from those social groups which gain nothing from perestroyka—from the military-industrial complex. However, democrats should not denounce their opponents, but try and win them over.

Gavriil Popov: It's necessary to work out a common programme for demcratic forces both in Russia and the Soviet Union as a whole as soon as possible. The democratic movement should be reorganized and have a more clear-cut structure. Even though this may appear as running counter to our democratic aspirations, there is no way for us to avoid a period of a tight organization. Where democrats are in power—in local Soviets or the Supreme Soviets of the Republics—they must step up their work and do their most to promote perestroyka. While the Centre is still very strong, and the local Supreme Soviets do not enjoy real power, we have to show our voters what can be done at the local level and work to achieve this.

Either the situation in the country will change as a result of victory of the Republics over the Centre, or the democratic forces will have to retreat temporarily, form an opposition and start preparations for new elections and a new cycle of reforms which will begin in 1991, when the decisions adopted by the 4th congress prove to be inoperable. [Popov ends]

One common feature in these responses: no one, except perhaps Gavriil Popov, suggests a conccrete programme of action.

Democrats were up to the mark when the political situation was favourable to them before theory was put into practice and thus their ideas of how to promote democracy in the country fully coincided with those of the president and the general public. Today the situation is completely different. The split in the democratic movement is only too obvious.

The alignment of political forces has also changed. The centre of political struggle has shifted to the Republics: ahead there are two referendums—on private onwership and on the Soviet Union's future.

Much will depend on those referendums. If we want our reforms to be furthered we have to act now. Democrats already have their own mass media and organizations at the local level. It's time to make use of them for constructive purposes. Who else but democrats will explain to the people the true nature of reforms and show that private ownership and sovereignty are the basis of a normal civilized life.

We have no time for strife. We'd better save strength to withstand the onslaught from the right.

Press Control Attempts Reviewed

PM2401103391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Jan 91 Union Edition p 3

[Article by E. Gonzalyez: "In the Beginning There Was the Word"]

[Text] Then we crossed it out... I recall an anecdote from the times of stagnation. There is a parade on Red Square. On the guests' rostrum is a military delegation from France—Napoleon Bonaparte and several generals. Napoleon is reading a Soviet newspaper while the generals are trying to draw his attention to the troops marching past.

"If we had had soldiers like that," one says, "we would probably not have lost the Battle of Waterloo."

Napoleon reads his newspaper.

"If we had had artillery like that," another general says, "we would indeed not have lost the Battle of Waterloo."

Napoleon reads his newspaper.

"If we had had missiles like that," a third general says, "we would of course not have lost the Battle of Waterloo."

Here Napoleon stops reading and says: "If we had had newspapers like this no one would ever have found out that we lost the Battle of Waterloo."

There is no need to guess precisely which newspaper the dictator was reading so enviously—at the time the newspapers differed little from each other. I have been working in the press for quite a long time and I remember the time when certain words could only be used in a sentence in a certain order. This was supervised by editors, duty officers from among members of the editorial collegium, the chief editor, the censor, and, of course, when the issue was published, the curator. That was understandable—only the truth can be set out using different words and remain the truth. But lies must be printed to look identical.

It is of interest that at the time it seemed to many people that if you accidentally replaced one word with another everything would collapse. But then people began surreptitiously to change words and... nothing happened. However, for a long time after what was permitted to a journalist remained impermissible for an official. I once had a "talk" with a deputy minister. If I remember precisely the deputy minister of Installation and Special Construction Work. I brought it to him for his official signature. He read it, saying: "Excellent... That's good... That's it precisely..." But then he said: "I very much like the way this is written. But you realize we cannot write like that. Look, we all go about in identical gray suits, gray coats, and gray hats. And we must all speak not in a gray way but more or less the same."

And again a notable detail: He left his post with the advent of the era of glasnost, when it was possible to speak in his own voice but, it turned out, he had no voice. Actually, others found things to say. They began excitedly to blame their shortcomings on... the mass media. Glasnost became one of the first achievements of perestroyka but throughout that time it remained a luxury item costing nothing to sacrifice at a difficult minute. And there have been more than enough of those minutes (beginning with Chernobyl). And now the latest one—the tragic events in the Baltic.

Has the syndrome of keeping quiet, of distorting, of being inventive with information, been repeated this time? Yes and no. In the first hours everything proceeded according to the familiar scenario repeated dozens of times in extreme situations, when there is an obvious desire to make out that what is wanted is reality. Today this can be regretted, but should we be angry?

I personally turned my emotions into a different channel: I rejoiced that truthful information came not a year or a month later and not following the radio voices but literally the next day, and we produced it ourselves.

Normal for our split, contradictory society. But who thinks like that? Nobody. And again everyone remained dissatisfied with the mass media. Some because there was an attempt to impose the official version on them. Others because they did not support this version. And here is the result: The country's president, at a session of the USSR Supreme Soviet, suggests that the operation of the law on the press should be suspended and the deputies should restrict themselves to a commission that must in some way keep glasnost within a specific framework no one has established. And before that the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet had specifically guided television as regards covering its own work.

For an understanding of the moment it is probably important to understand the president's true motives. But here one can only speculate. It would probably be interesting to know in advance how the deputies will try to control the mass media. But here everything will explain itself. What in my view really deserves consideration is the feasibility and expediency of such mutual relations with the press, radio, and television.

Their sources are precisely in those times when certain words had to be in a specific sequence. It was then that the conviction was formed that as we wrote in the newspaper so it would be. It was then that the mass media became a means for controlling the country.

A resolution was adopted, it was published in all the newspapers—and the deed was done. A problem arose, the editors of the central newspapers would gather, they were ordered to cover it—and the deed was done. An initiative emerged (or the newspapermen thought it up for themselves), there was a calculation as to what it would provide on the scale of the country—and the deed was done.

Look around you and you will see the results. But the conviction remains that if you can write how you want in the newspapers then everything will change in life. And at the level of faith. That is why the managers are not even worried whether people will read such newspapers. After all, they used to read them before!

Before much was different. Before there was meat and there were no other newspapers, there were "jammers" and no "short-wavers," there was a generation educated in the "Brief Course" [reference to Stalin's brief course on the history of the CPSU] and there were no meetings, processions, and different parties... indeed who knows what there was and what there was not. There was and is something making us review even our attitude toward God. But we are quite unable to change our attitude toward the mass media. Perhaps because Judgment Day will happen sometime in the future but newspapers are published daily?

I can understand the desire of the managers not only to free themselves of public control through the press but also to rely on the mass media. But after all there is the obvious law of nature: You can only rely on something that does not succumb to pressure.

But man is weak and prefers those publications that are like a balm to his heart. And here another law of nature comes into force: Any action has a counteraction. I venture to assert that the appearance of many superradical publications in our country was promoted by the ruling organs' attitude toward the mass media. In the past they did not want to share the pages of the existing newspapers so new newspapers appeared, even newspapers that cause no rejoicing. A similar situation can now be observed in the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting. How would it seem possible to oppose television's new policy? After all you cannot put another tower alongside the Ostankino one. And murder will out after all. We can all see (or rather hear) how the second half of the state committee—radio—is beginning to compensate for the muzzled first half.

Of course it will be a pity if only one conclusion is drawn from what I have said: That it is time to tie up the radio too. That is a futile, pointless, and hopeless policy. After all the Napoleon of the anecdote was far from correct in his assessment of the Soviet press. Of course, to conceal (only for a time and only from ourselves) a defeat in a particular battle, such newspapers will do. But to win a battle you need not only real bullets and missiles but also real newspapers. Perhaps real newspapers above all. Of course, they do not rule the world but they do mirror what is happening in it and real, not mythical, public opinion.

He who doubts this axiom can check its truth right now when, to my great regret, the war in the Persian Gulf zone has begun.

Perestroyka Defended; Independent Press Hit

PM2301170091 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
19 Jan 91 Second Edition p 2

[Article by Anatoliy Karpychev under rubric "My View": "Loving, They Do Not Disavow... In Defense of Perestroyka, in Defense of the President"]

[Text] Such is the fate of our country: Whatever happens in it arouses uneasy interest abroad. Not because we need wise counsels from abroad—we have enough wise men of our own. The explanation is simpler: We cannot be ignored.

Perestroyka has doubled and trebled this interest. But meanwhile it has in my opinion cultivated a certain stereotypical view. I shall explain what I mean. As soon as the USSR president begins to talk about imposing order in the country or repeats the well-known axiom that democracy presupposes responsibility and discipline, certain people in the West immediately try to maintain that Gorbachev is becoming a conservative, that he is being controlled by the military, the party bureaucrats, and the KGB, and it is they who will carry the blame for everything... if the need arises. In short, they resort to intimidation.

This tune is sounded constantly. But it could sound as much as it liked were it not for one thing. For some reason I have recently been unable to shake off the feeling that certain political forces in our own house have begun "major maneuvers" to the accompaniment of this tune.

What for? You will ask.

It is almost impossible to find a common sense answer. If however we try to do so, one of our conjectures will probably be that intelligent people have felt that it is not the apparatus nor the party but Time which is currently making appraisals on the "who's who" principle.

The tragic events in Lithuania have illuminated this with great clarity. The events have also shed light on certain natural laws we formerly attributed to chance, to peculiarities of a way of thinking, or to pluralism of views. Certain newspapers and individuals, it seemed to me, quite frankly do not conceal their pleasure that Vilnius finally happened. Who is next, they inquire playfully, though what they should be asking is not who is next in line for bloodshed, but how it became possible and what should be done in order not to repeat the spine-chilling tragedy, and under no circumstances to inflame passions. If we do not impose order ourselves, neither the appeals by Boris Yeltsin and others to the United Nations nor the surfeit of ultimatum demands from abroad in respect of the Baltic will help now.

Everyone knows what happened in Vilnius. The president and other officials spoke about this at the USSR Supreme Soviet session. It was reported on television. Aleksandr Nevzorov's program dealt with it. I have not the slightest doubt that the USSR president is a supporter of political dialogue, that he is worried by the situation and is seeking a way out of it. But obviously there is something else: Some people want to pin all the blame on him.

As a human being it is a terrible thing to say, but in every tragedy we have suffered recently I see not only blood and tears but also a struggle for power, monstrous hypocrisy, insincerity, and an attempt to boost popularity ratings using innocent blood. Obviously, no one admits to this.

Every human tragedy is our common pain and our common responsibility. When some people start a polemic on the subject of who has more pain in his heart and who has less, I'm sorry, but this is frivolous.

At times you observe more frivolity and hypocrisy than the "critical mass" is supposed to contain. It is shameful to see all this. But how can I begin to trust people who not very long ago ardently maintained that "in the Soviet Union the CPSU has taken the initiative in elaborating the theoretical bases of the new face of socialism, the most important features were defined at the 19th party conference" (see KOMMUNIST No.11, 1989), when today these same people are getting just as worked up about the "crimes of a regime not prepared to quit the stage."

I have quoted the headline members of the so-called founding council of MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI prefaced their statement in issue No. 3. Yes, this is it word for word: "The Crime of a Regime Which Is Not Prepared To Quit the Stage." The founders and authors include T. Abuladze, A. Bovin, O. Bogomolov, M. Zhvanetskiy, N. Petrakov, S. Shatalin, and others. They make a special appeal to journalists: If you do not have the strength and opportunity to tell the truth, then at least do not be a party to lies.

I think this request applies not just to journalists. The strength and opportunity to tell the truth exists. But our problem today is that in my opinion we are free to speak the truth, but sometimes we tell lies and do not accept someone else's opinion when he is telling the truth. And today there is no mechanism in the social structure that can stop lying, censure people for it, and ultimately slap a fine on it. It is not just some newspapers that have become independent. The worrying fact is that disinformation has become "independent."

In the same third issue of MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI I was very saddened by judgments made about the president by a number of writers. It is not a matter of the USSR president being beyond criticism. But there is criticism and criticism. The fact that the founders of MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI link the name of the man who was and remains the leader of perestroyka with the last hour of the "regime," seemed to me strange on the whole. Here I had better quote: "Now, when the last hour of the regime is at hand, it has entered its decisive battle: Economic reform is blocked, press and television censorship is being reimposed, the language of blatant demagoguery has gushed forth vigorously. And the main thing is that war has been declared on the republics." And it goes on: "After bloody Sunday in Vilnius does much remain of what we heard so frequently from the president in recent years: 'humane socialism,' 'new thinking,' 'the common European home?' Practically nothing has survived."

Something has survived. Let us not scare ourselves, and especially, let us not scare others. I read the same information sources as the journalists who wrote this mourning issue. Something has survived, despite the assertions of the fellow travelers of perestroyka. And I do mean fellow travelers.

It is a pity that people such as the founders of MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI no longer have faith in renewal and in M.S. Gorbachev, that they have disavowed a great deal. Including things they formerly respected.

And here I am reminded of some words by the poetess Veronika Tushnova, very fine words carrying a high moral charge: "Loving, they do not disavow. For life is not over tomorrow."

However, some are disavowing not for the first time... And life goes on. I could list many names. But... readers know very well who they are.

Having become accustomed to believing the newspapers unreservedly, even now people continue to believe some of those who disavow faith, ideals, and comrades. And disavowals would be all very well, but...

Yesterday morning fresh "independent" newspapers appeared. Following MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI's lead, they let fly a scathing attack on the USSR president. I do not believe that the coincidence was fortuitous, the more so as certain newspapers are staffed by journalists nurtured by the founders of MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI. The newspaper KURANTY (founder: Moscow City Soviet), publishing an appeal by an extraordinary conference attended by 236 people, wants the resignation of the president and early direct elections for the presidency and the USSR Supreme Soviet. The reason? "The recurrent suppression by the central authorities of the legitimate aspiration of peoples toward freedom and independence..."

The fact that M.S. Gorbachev occupies the posts of USSR president and CPSU leader is particularly disliked by NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA (publisher: Moscow City Soviet of People's Deputies). The stock of political labels I found on its pages reminded me of the period of stagnation. Verily, it is written in a most mettlesome manner...

A joke is a joke, but this is no joking matter. In one of my articles, talking about E.A. Shevardnadze's resignation, I quoted a Western newspaper that asked: Whose resignation will they demand next? It named a name—I was not about to do so. What does it matter... Today our "independents" have named it. All right, so in theory it was only to be expected.

...And all the same life is not over tomorrow.

At the present time neither emotion nor complaints about each other must lead us away from common sense. Once again I repeat: Let us think together how to escape from violent confrontation. What lessons and conclusions can we draw from events? Or as before will we just shift the blame toward the center? As before, will we zealously seek an answer to the question: Who gave the order?

Human blood has been shed on Lithuanian soil. Is it really true that Moscow alone is responsible for this? What about the Lithuanian government and the Supreme Soviet headed by Mr. Landsbergis? Was it Moscow that stoked up the hatred toward the Russian population?

When you think about the events in Lithuania, it also occurs to you that the media must be restructured. As far as the press is concerned, silence is not golden. Why were we silent, for instance, when during a visit to the United States in December, Landsbergis warned that "this winter will be decisive" for his struggle? He was convinced that he will be the victor and will "repulse the attack."

About a year ago Mr. Landsbergis accused President Bush of betraying the interests of the Lithuanian people. The President gave an extremely peremptory reply (see PRAVDA for 8 May), but in December he spread the idea that Soviet people are being set against Lithuanians. Not one newspaper, including the independents if I am not mistaken, reported this fact. By his own account, Landsbergis traveled to the United States to ask for "political protection." And again, just as in May, he went on about "the old imperial Russian thinking," about the "Kremlin boa constrictor," and about the wicked fabrications of the Soviet press... True, on this occasion he compared the fate of Lithuania with that of Kuwait and said that the Lithuanian question had to be resolved in accordance with a three plus one formula: The three victorious powers and Lithuania itself, in his opinion, should take part in the talks. The newspapers said nothing about this. What a pity.

I should like to conclude with extracts from some Western newspapers. "The hysterical reaction to what is happening today in Lithuania is totally unnecessary," writes Britain's DAILY TELEGRAPH. "Can't the Lithuanians see that Gorbachev needs time and stability for his perestroyka to work," notes another newspaper. "It is not worth the West adopting a belligerent pose, it ought to refrain from abusing the Soviet Union."

There are certainly some very negative appraisals in the Western press. Officials are telling our editorial office about this. For example, the Australian ambassador in Moscow has the honor of presenting a prime ministerial statement "condemning the use of force." Our own correspondents are passing on news about protest acts in various countries. The words "dictatorship," "bloodletting," and others, fired off from our own territory as well, are paraded all over the newspaper pages. Some people have already presented ultimatums and called for an end to Soviet-American dialogue, aid...

Ultimatums are not needed. This has all happened before. Even at such a sad time, such a critical hour, we will not lose our heads. We shall not disavow what has been achieved by perestroyka. There is no alternative to it. We cannot turn back either. There is only one way out: Not confrontation, but joint efforts in the name of the people. The people are suffering most of all. They pay for everything. Not only with tears. But why do we need to go through all this?

Yeltsin Stance on Baltics Criticized

PM2301151091 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 19 Jan 91 First Edition p 1

[Report by Vyacheslav Lukashevich under the "Seven Days" rubric: "'Yeltsin Is Not Russia'"]

[Text] The seven days from Saturday to Saturday have been difficult, bitter, and nightmarish—it has been a week of conflict not only in our country but throughout the whole world, a week when reason and common sense have been in desperately short supply. It is difficult to talk about this without feeling pain and regret, and to write coolly.

Just 10 days ago who could have imagined that there would be tragedy in Lithuania and that the local nationalists and political extremists would consistently lead the republic into crisis and, as the first to employ violence, provoke bloodshed, playing the army card, as has happened on more than one occasion. Moreover, not wanting to overstretch their "imagination," they prefer to use tried and tested methods and scenarios. And in this sense alone can I agree with KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA's decision to place Tbilisi, Baku, and Vilnius alongside each other in the headline on its special edition. As in Tbilisi, Baku, and other bloodstained points of the country, all the blame, mud-slinging, and cursing falls blasphemously upon the shoulders of the military.

The blame is shifted shamelessly. Meanwhile, those who control mankind's fate and the "eminent democrats" will not contemplate any other truth but their own. Despite the fact that the truth is ever more insistently breaking through to the reader and the viewer.

As I write, I am watching vivid scenes from Nevzorov's special edition of "600 Seconds." You must have seen them—they were shown several times on Wednesday on central television in line with a Union parliament decision. You could not fail to be moved by the sight of the soldiers and officers in the television center—they were unshaven, they hadn't slept and in the words of Aleksandr Nevzorov, who himself was recently shot at point-blank range, had been "flung" into the very heart of the conflict. Had they not occupied the television center and carried out the order, who knows what might have happened in Lithuania. After all, for days on end it had been the source of hysteria and calls for confrontation and even civil war. All this was being directed by none other than the parliament chairman himself, V. Landsbergis.

Today the democratic press is calling it an attack on democracy, an attempt at a military coup. Thirty founders of MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI, hailing 13 January as "Bloody Sunday" and "the execution of democracy," are now appealing to journalists: "If you do not have the strength or opportunity to speak the truth, then at least do not be a party to the lies!" The only thing that is not clear is, what kind of "truth" do they mean—A. Gelman, M. Zakharov, A. Nuykin, G. Popov, T. Zaslavskaya, I. Golembiovskiy, V. Shostakovskiy, M. Zhvanetskiy, and so on?

Last Saturday, I wrote that "the paratroopers had not raised their flag above a single Lithuanian rural soviet nor was there a guard with a knife in his belt and a machine gun at the ready outside the republic parliament chairman's door." I was mistaken. On the night of 12-13 January the television center became this rural soviet. Actually, there is another barricade too—the gloomy building where 42 members of the special militia are under guard, having been sentenced to death by Lithuanian democrats for refusing to take another oath, realizing that just as we have only one set of parents so too do we have only one motherland....

All of this was shown "live" as they say, free from provocative rhetoric and propagandist commentary. And between scenes we saw the intrepid face of Nevzorov, whose program has already been denounced as "loathsome" by the NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA which declared the television journalist himself a "villain." So yet another "enemy" has been discovered—moreover, an important and extraordinary enemy. So come on, guys, jump to it! Pass your democratic sentences, hot on the heels of the death sentence issued to USSR People's Deputy Viktor Alksnis, that a certain League for a Free Latvia intends to carry out within the framework of a "professed freedom" before 31 January. Heaven knows, truth is expensive for us nowadays!

Eyewitnesses and eyewitness accounts are varied. Especially among the own correspondents and special correspondents from the deep blue media sea. You'd be amazed at what somebody who is still half asleep claims to have witnessed on a noisy nighttime street. Well, what can you expect from a sleepwalker. But it seems that journalists from IZVESTIYA and MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS are looking at events with both eyes open. Murders, screams, women under the tank tracks. God forbid that such a death should occur. Here it is a sin to accuse somebody of being a liar. But if they really did witness these things, why does IZVESTIYA say that L. Asanavichyute, who perished under a tank, was 13 years old while MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS says he was 24? Why upon turning the pages of the newspapers do we find various surnames for the dead lieutenant, and where did they find these officers who are not "registered" with the Main Directorate for Cadres but who, judging from articles in the very same NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, appear to have done some rather strange things?

This is no longer pluralism nor is it dissidence. In my opinion, this smacks of distorted facts which are cooked according to the "taste" and habits of one or other "independent" publication. And it is no surprise that on the last working day of the country's Supreme Soviet, the people's deputies and the USSR president were forced to hold a heated discussion on objectivity and responsibility for press coverage of events taking place. For freedom of speech and freedom to misinterpret the facts to political ends are not one and the same thing.

The ever composed and fair-minded Leningrad Professor and People's Deputy A. Denisov answered a question on the reason for the tragedy in Vilnius by saying briefly and precisely: "Lithuania is divided." In other words, confrontation. In the Baltic region, the Transcaucasus, and Moldova, this confrontation began not yesterday or even six months ago but significantly earlier when various "fronts for perestroyka" with a fascist tinge began to emerge, gangs began to be formed, and the carabinieri, "national guards," and "territorial defense units" acquired weapons and with the help of the new republic powers stood in opposition to the legal armed forces and the Union law enforcement organs. The discriminatory acts adopted in several republics called for confrontation between Russian-speaking and indigenous peoples. "The war of laws and sovereignties" led to conflict in the highest echelons of power.

Today the storm cloud of conflict is advancing on Russia. And as everywhere, it is descending on to the Russian earth from inaccessible "skies."

In an attempt to investigate the dramatic situation in Lithuania, B. Yeltsin, head of the Russian Parliament, goes immediately to...Estonia. Boris Nikolayevich obviously thinks that the heights of Tallinn's Old City offer a better view than Moscow's hills. Perhaps they do. In any case, they are nearer to the United Nations. And along with the heads of the Baltic republics he signs an appeal to His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar with the request to postpone the deadline for implementing the resolution on the Persian Gulf and "to organize an immediate conference under UN auspices on settling the problems in the Baltic states." As if the USSR has already ceased to exist. But at a press conference in Moscow Yeltsin explained that this was "more of a moral and psychological act aimed at ensuring that this voice was heard."

Nevertheless, bombs and missiles began to fall on Kuwait and Iraq. Meanwhile, the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet chairman was reproached for "betraying" the Russian-speaking population of the Baltic region by the hundreds of thousands of "emigres," "occupiers," and "foreigners" whose rights had been shamelessly discriminated against, leading to the clash in Vilnius. Moreover, the wave of appeals and open letters to the Russian leader and the telegrams and telephone calls to newspaper editorial teams comes not only from Russian speakers in the Baltic republics but also from the Russian republic and other Union republics. Believe me, they are many in number, and it is not possible to look at each suggestion one by one. Boris Nikolayevich also has some. The oft repeated words "Landsbergis is not the whole of Lithuania, and Yeltsin is not the whole of Russia" seem to express the main line of thought.

The military has its own concern. This is connected above all with the head of the Russian parliament's statement on forming a Russian army and the appeal over Estonian radio and television for servicemen drafted in the RSFSR to disregard the USSR Constitution.

Recently, there was a report out about a homemade bomb thrown over the fence at one of the military units stationed in Latvia. The "bomb" thrown by Russia's leader has exploded over the garrisons of the whole country.

Nevertheless, I will quote one telegram which was sent to No. 2 Krasnopresnenskaya Embankment [RSFSR Supreme Soviet building] by a Pacific Ocean seamen who met Yeltsin last year.

They make this appeal to the head of the Russian legislature: "Your statement on the need to create a Russian army allegedly to defend democracy has been judged by us as preparation for unleashing the next lot of bloodshed and establishing your personal dictatorship. Whom do you intend to fight? From whom do you intend to defend yourself? The Soviet Union has someone to defend its people and its motherland. But your call for servicemen and others to disobey the orders of the commanders and chiefs pursues far-reaching aims.

"We remember your statement on the need for united USSR Armed Forces—during the visit to the Pacific Ocean submariners. So when were you speaking the truth? Obviously, you are more in tune with a Landsbergis-style democracy. Yes, you will have to defend such a democracy—from all your own people!"

With your permission, I would sign my name to these words, my military friends. I too remember these assurances. Moreover, I voted for Yeltsin at the USSR People's Deputies elections. This, I thought, is a straightforward man, somewhat out of favor, who has suffered all kinds of experiences and who understands the people, their soul. And during the First Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies, when the fate of the head of the Russian state was being decided, after the first defeat—it was on the Monday, you remember—I shook Boris Nikolayevich by the hand and sincerely wished him success, and the next day he won by three votes. Today, however, I would take a different view. I have seen his lack of political balance, his unaccommodating attitude, the incessant confrontation with the USSR president in the course of which every slip and every mistake is exploited. I grant that old insults are not easily forgiven. But what about the people, meanwhile? As usual, it is the Soviet individual who continues to foot all the bills.

The candles of grief and anxiety are still burning in Vilnius. In Riga barricades are still being erected in the streets. In Tallinn a defense council is being set up. In Tskhinvali the shots never cease. The Persian Gulf is ablaze...

But we must not lose hope completely. We need civil peace and accord. And is it not upon all of us, the people, that this depends?

Social Scientist Advocates 'Good Dictatorship'

91UN0767D Moscow GOLOS in Russian No 1, 5-11 Jan 91 p 3

[Article by social scientist Andranik Migranyan: "We Need a Good Dictator!"]

[Text] In our troubled times people ask political scientists the way they used to as fortune-tellers: What is going to happen? I would rather not be in a role of foreteller of the Fatherland's destiny, since fortune-tellers may fantasize. I, on the other hand, can offer a political prognosis using existing societal trends as a basis, while trying to forecast which of them may become prevalent in the near future.

It is true that after my publications, and the recommendations they contain, I hear this: You have brought the dictatorship down on us by your own prophesies! Now everybody started saying that it may become a reality. But those who reproach me forget about the circumstances and the correlation of forces, and I already foresaw a dictatorship as a power formula a year ago.

There are situations when, perhaps, a dictatorship is useful and desirable, because it can forestall the emergence of a worse dictatorship—if we cannot do without one entirely. Yes, it would be good to have an opportunity to select a good dictatorship. It may be a lesser evil than the one brought about by chaos.

I do not see a different choice now, either: We need a good dictatorship to make manageable the process that would bring about the stability of democratic structures in society manageable.

We are, however, in a situation of chaos, and a worse dictatorship may emerge. Whose? I will put it this way: Those who will shut down the opportunities to modernize the country in the direction of a market and of a real democracy.

There are two possible tendencies in the development of society now. The discussion at the All-Union Congress of People's Deputies confirms my opinion.

In case the first one prevails, events will develop as follows. In a situation of a stand-off between the republics and the center, the center will agree de jure to what has already taken place de facto. A reorganization of the Union will begin, and the republics will acquire independence and sovereignty. The republics will agree to have the new center as a coordinating organ. The extent of its powers will be determined by the republics themselves through the delegation of functions. In the current situation such a power structure would be the lesser of the two evils. I think it is clear to everybody that the center should retain certain functions. Why? To begin with, the resolution of inter-republic conflicts cannot be resolved by the efforts of the republics alone. Therefore a center that is empowered to regulate such relations is needed.

Second tendency. In the current situation the center's attempt to restore former control over the republics is clearly visible. The latest events give serious reasons to believe that this tendency is quite realistic.

The center wants to adopt a concept of the future union as a single state. Federated, but single, and with considerable powers concentrated at the center. This is not a confederation and not a commonwealth. I think we will all have to pay dearly for the implementation of that version of unity. All republics have announced that their laws supersede Union ones; they also declared their sovereignty. In this case the center will have to impose a Union treaty on them and force them to adopt it. In case of disobedience it would have to disband all recalcitrant soviets, including the republic parliaments. This is what direct presidential rule means—the very rule ad vocatd and adopted by some deputies and cultural figures recently.

Naturally, it will be impossible to do it without violence. In the nearest perspective, if such a scenario materializes, it will lead to the establishment of an occupational regime in many regions of the country. Possibly with the help of tanks. It is clear by now that the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian parliaments will not give up without a battle. The same situation is in Georgia, Armenia, and some other regions. Judging by the statements coming from Nazarbayev, Karymov, and Yeltsin, nobody is planning to cave in to the will of the center. It will have to be, as I already said, forced upon them.

In this situation I am very concerned about the possibility of a large-scale use of the Armed Forces in places where human masses concentrate—on the streets and the squares. This will bring unforeseen consequences, because nobody knows what condition the Army is in today. It is one thing when the soldiers "smooth out" interethnic conflicts, and quite another when the Army is used against the population of entire republics. The use of force against Russia and its authorities is even more problematic.

As a result of using the Army against the republics, the only real child of perestroyka—the soviets—may be crushed by a direct presidential rule.

If this happens, an appointed structure of power will be established on the basis of already existing structures: the party, the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs], the KGB, the Army, plus the worker control inspections. In this case the country essentially will return to where it started in 1985—the beginning of perestroyka. But in its inferior version. Why? At that time society was living through a process of disintegration of totalitarianism and therefore was in a gentler state of mind. Today's hatred and intolerance, including the ideological one, had not been present then.

I cannot rule out a different scenario of how the events may develop. The center's attempt to keep the empire under control by imposing presidential rule and by smashing the soviets and the parliaments may bring not only the fall of the democrats and non-communist parliaments, but of the reformist center itself. This is because it will be necessary to provide an ideological justification for the regime that would be imposed by force of arms. It is hard to return to the values of socialism, internationalism, and communism, and to make people believe in them. They have been totally discredited—not without the help of the current reformist leadership. Therefore those who will come to power by the force of bayonets will probably rely on the nationalistic, patriotic, anti- West, anti-individual, anti-market, egalitarian ideas. But this is not the worst. I am afraid that the current leadership, if it is still there, will become a hostage to the force-based power structure.

Perestroyka already has suffered some losses, but so far only at the top echelon of power: Bakatin, and Shevardnadze's attempt to leave... So far there has not been a frontal clash between the center and the republics. The process has been developing lopsidedly—in the direction of strengthening the republics. But Shevardnadze's statement at the congress brought attention to the fact that the conservative forces have consolidated themselves in the upper echelon of power and now are trying to restore the center's position. Therefore, the victory may turn out to be a Pyrrhic one. It is not the current reformer who will win. Perhaps, he wants to preserve the system out of good intentions, and therefore conducts some reforms under the center's leadership. But most likely the result of the center's victory over the republics (if this happens) will be that the movement towards the real market and democratic institutions will be stalled for many years. The idea of democratic reform itself will be discredited.

It looks like the center's attempt to restore control over the country has already started. The soviets turned out to be disobedient, and therefore the center attempts to create a missing mechanism to enforce the presidential will that is now not being carried out by the republic soviets. The vertical structures are being restored: the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the KGB mobilization, the creation of inspections, the mobilization of the industrial-military complex directors. These are the infrastructures which will serve as supports for the president in his imposition of his will on the scale of the entire country. The policy of compromises that was Gorbachev's hallmark is over.

I have a feeling that he did not expect where the reform of the political system, started by him, might lead. Mikhail Sergeyevich did not expect to find himself at the center, deprived of the opportunity to manage the processes taking place in the country. As a result, the forces that have a stake in keeping the country unified, have separated themselves from him. Either with the assent of the president, or against his will, but they make him accept the strategy that may lead, in my opinion, to grave consequences.

Leningrad Media To Break From Gostelradio

LD2401183791 Moscow TASS in English 1815 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS correspondent Nikolay Kondratenko]

[Text] Leningrad January 24 TASS—The Leningrad Committee for Radio and Television decided on Wednesday to become independent from the Soviet State Committee for Radio and Television Gosteleradio. The Leningrad committee is currently subordinated to Gosteleradio and the City Council.

The decision was made at a meeting of the committee's employees at the initiative of its chairman Boris Petrov, who is viewed as a conservative.

When Petrov banned a live interview with member of the national parliament and criminal investigator Nikolay Ivanov last April, deputies of the Leningrad City Council made an attempt to remove him from his post. The Gosteleradio leadership overruled their vote and rescued Petrov.

Since then, relations between the two committees have become growing tense.

Petrov told TASS that the issue of independence of the Leningrad committee is not new. "To solve the problem now when Gosteleradio itself is undergoing changes would be best," he said.

"Since Gosteleradio is being divided into two firms, it is a good time for us to become independent from both, Gosteleradio and the Leningrad authorities," he said.

"We propose that the Leningrad committee be transformed into an independent company with the status of a republican organisation with the right to broadcast to other regions of the country under agreements," Petrov said.

"Russia, now creating its own television, would then also have at its disposal Leningrad television, which is quite popular," he said.

Nevzorov Discusses TV Program on Lithuania

91UN0743A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 18 Jan 91 p 1

["Abridged transcript" of Leningrad journalist Aleksandr Nevzorov responses to television viewers' questions, by V. Andriyanov: "To Tell This Truth, Too"]

[Text]*On 18 January, in accordance with a USSR Supreme Soviet resolution, Central Television's Channel One showed a report from Lithuania by celebrated Leningrad journalist Aleksandr Nevzorov. The same evening he answered questions from viewers on Leningrad television. We think that RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA readers will be interested in his comments. The transcript is published in abridged form.*

[Unidentified reporter] A question presented mafia-style and unsigned. "You are out of the hospital now, so we can finish the job; it is hazardous to your health to speak against democracy..." And so on. Why did Aleksandr Nevzorov, the producer of "600 Seconds," need to speak against the Leningrad City Soviet again, to direct barbs at it? Many did not understand. It is commonly thought that grief and tragedy usually unite people. I did not want to touch on this Leningrad City Soviet issue;

therefore, you are free not to answer, but I wanted to quote this kind of question, too.

[Nevzorov] I will answer the question about the Leningrad City Soviet. I do not believe in either the empathy toward Lithuania shown by the Leningrad City Soviet or its compassion or understanding of what is happening there. I do not believe in that. Because people who have not been there and who do not know cannot pass a judgment of the kind Leningrad City Soviet dared to pass. I do not understand how people who cannot ensure normal bus traffic here undertake upon themselves to change Lithuanian politics or in some way to stabilize the situation there. I do not understand how alimony payers, people who fall down drunk on the street—and there is again a militia report, some Leningrad City Soviet deputy again...

[Unidentified reporter] Sasha, this is why I did not want to ask this question, because the relationship...

[Nevzorov] I do not believe in their sincerity. I understand how much glory they will create for themselves on the blood spilled there...

[Unidentified reporter] Here is a question, a painful one, from my point of view: "To be honest, you have bet a lot on this card. Are you not afraid that you will lose the trust of some of your ardent fans?"

[Nevzorov] I am not a little boy, and I understand what I am facing. I knew all too well that I would have to say good-bye to some people who had developed trust and love for this program. I knew all too well the brutal reaction these 15 minutes could cause: 15 minutes of a different truth about the same event. I do not work for ratings. In principle, I do not give a damn about the rating, because this whole action with Lithuania and this broadcast, which I did and for which I alone take responsibility, was a conscious act. I have no regrets about what I have done. Even if I learn that this has cost my program half of its viewers.

[Unidentified reporter] A personal question, but of a broad scope: "What is your personal opinion: Was it necessary to bring the troops into an unarmed city? Why did the Russian-speaking crowd march to teach the legitimate government of Lithuania?"

[Nevzorov] First, they did not go there to teach anybody; they went with a petition. A little later, when everything comes out into the open there and the situation becomes less muddled, it will become clear that these were also unarmed people... And that they also were treated in a barbaric manner... By the way, this was mentioned in the program. The 70 people on whom boiling water was poured because firehoses had been connected with the central steam-heating system. They were beaten in such a way as to inflict hidden kidney injuries. Therefore, God forbid, they did not go there to teach anybody. As to the Army, even at that moment when we were there... For me there was no question that the Army presence was necessary.

[Unidentified reporter] Last question: Do you have any regrets?

[Nevzorov] No. I will say this to everybody: No. To those who love us and those who do not love us anymore—I mean the program; to those who trusted us and not do not trust us anymore, believing that we have sold out to Gorby or Gidaspov, I say: I have no regrets. Because there is this most important thing—even though it goes against everybody, against public opinion, in spite of everybody, and hurts some people's serious political games that are being played on this tragedy—the important thing is to speak this truth, too. Somebody had to do it. I thank God that it happened to be me...

'Vzglyad' Material on Baltics Censored

PM2301161391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Jan 91 Union Edition p 1

[INTERFAX report: "'Vzglyad' Protest"]

[Text] The creative collective of the youth television program "Vzglyad," banned at the end of last year by the leadership of the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting, has accused Committee Chairman Leonid Kravchenko of pursuing a policy of "one-sided coverage of events taking place in the country." A statement by program head Aleksandr Lyubimov, obtained by INTERFAX, points out that "Vzglyad" has prepared a major program on Lithuania, backed by the USSR Supreme Soviet Committee for Questions of Glasnost and Citizens' Rights and Appeals. The program's editors have a large volume of video material on events in the Baltic republics, but it cannot be shown on Central Television, the statement says.

Gorbachev Greets Znaniye Society

LD2401210391 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev has sent a greeting to the participants in the 10th Congress of the all-Union Znaniye [Knowledge] Society. Noting that members of our country's intelligentsia have always been the soul of society and the soul of the people, the USSR president called on them to adopt an active civic position in support of those measures being taken by the supreme bodies of power to overcome the crisis situation, restore calm and order in the country, eliminate interethnic strife, continue the deepening of democratic reforms, and assert man's right to work, life, and creativity in conditions of peace and concord. Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev wished the participants in the Congress success in their activities.

A statement issued by the participants in the 12th all-Union conference of peace supporters, which has ended in Moscow, echoes this greeting. The Soviet peace movement, whose efforts have for decades been concentrated on the struggle for peace in the world as a whole, is now forced to concern itself with peace in its own land. The document says that the movement follows with great pain and alarm the increasing tension and the sociopolitical and interethnic clashes. The participants in the movement consider the increasing instances of force being used in internal conflicts to be especially dangerous.

KGB Find Classified Documents on UK Citizen

LD2301174491 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Network in Russian 1530 GMT 23 Jan 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] The following report has been sent to us from the USSR KGB:

On 20 January, at Sheremetyevo-2 airport, during a customs check, documents regarding a deal concluded between, on the Soviet side, the Chelyabinsk branch of the Ekho production-ecological firm, part of the international nongovernmental fund, "Everlasting memory of Soldiers," and on the foreign side, the British (Dorf) Trading International, were discovered on and confiscated from a British subject, Paul Pearson. According to the documents, there was a plan to sell 140 billion rubles for $7.756 billion. Letters on giving assistance and support for a contract signed by Filshin, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Council of Ministers, and Shavoshev, manager of the Moscow Oblast agency of the USSR Promstroybank, were also found on the British citizen.

Such operations run counter to USSR legislation, so the confiscated material has been handed over to experts in the USSR State Bank and the USSR Ministry of Finance.

Academic Calls for 'Revival of Soviet Power'

PM2401150191 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 22 Jan 91 First Edition p 2

[Interview with V.G. Dolgov, member of the RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee and head of the Leningrad State University Sociology Faculty Social Management Department, by TASS correspondent V. Chernobrov; date and place unspecified: "In Favor of Real Socialism"—first two paragraphs are introduction]

[Text] Privatization is a cunning term and a slogan advantageous to the fairly large group of people who made millions under Brezhnev. In actual fact, however, privatization will lead to the destruction of our basic productive capacity: our plants, associations, and collective farms.

A TASS correspondent was told this by V.G. Dolgov, member of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Communist Party Central Committee and head of the Leningrad State University Sociology Faculty Social Management Department. In his opinion, the process that has begun in the economy is fraught with the danger of our national economy's collapsing completely, in which case perestroyka would mean a change of system for the Soviet people. The Russian Communist Party proposes an alternative: To achieve Russian revival by strengthening socialism.

[Chernobrov] Viktor Georgiyevich, what do you mean by "strengthening"?

[Dolgov] A real revival of soviet power in its classic, Leninist interpretation. A return to what the country abandoned with its adoption of the 1936 Constitution, when it switched to the territorial principle of electing deputies. And what was the result of that?

Candidates began to be nominated in one place and elected in another, thereby creating a third force, that placed its own people in key positions. Consequently, people who "look good," speak well, and often appear in the mass media now rise to the leading elite. As a rule, they are not from the production sphere but are well adapted to the games that the apparatus plays. Workers and collective farmers have found themselves pushed "into the background": Their representation in soviets at various levels has fallen to between five and seven percent. Consequently, the "first fiddle" is played by "servants of the people" rather than by its representatives.

We insist that deputies be nominated directly by labor collectives.

[Chernobrov] So, you are calling for unity between scientific socialism and the workers movement?

[Dolgov] Yes, because real socialism has great potential. We have not even reached it yet, but we are already hearing: "There is no alternative to a market system." Why? Surely there must be an alternative to unemployment for Soviet people and the loss of our state's industrial independence?

The year 1917 saw the first ever attempt in history to allow ordinary people to live and work for themselves. The conditions for that were being created, but power was seized by card-carrying party members rather than Communists.

You should notice that Lenin always spoke of the "socialist fatherland," with the emphasis on the word "fatherland," whereas his "followers" abandoned the "fatherland" concept and served only pseudo-ideas of distorted "socialism".

CPSU Outlines Local Budget Priorities

PM2401151591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 21 Jan 91 First Edition p 2

[TASS report: "CPSU Central Committee Commission: Budget Examined"]

[Text] The 17 January sitting of the CPSU Central Committee commission on questions of the party's financial and economic activity was dedicated to the formation of the Union republic Communist Parties' budgets for 1991. The sitting was chaired by Yu.A. Manayenkov, chairman of the commission and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee.

It was noted that in accordance with the 28th CPSU Congress guidelines, party committees have done considerable work on defining functions, reducing expenditure on the upkeep of the party apparatus, and cutting economic and other appropriations.

The draft budget approved by the commission makes it possible to give considerable financial support to the activity of primary party organizations, to finance local party organs, to retain professional cadres, to conduct organizational and mass political work, and to train party workers. Resources are being allocated to meet part of the cost of publishing city and rayon newspapers.

There are appropriations for organizing sanatorium and health resort services for workers and for helping party veterans.

Special attention was given to increasing party budget revenue, seeking ways to compensate for the loss of income due to the reduction in the scale of payment of party membership dues, the introduction of new tax legislation, and the increasing of wholesale prices and tariffs.

Yu.P. Semenov, member of the commission and general designer of the "Energiya" science and production association, advocated the party's participation in implementing global projects of importance to society.

V.G. Doroshenko, first secretary of the Kazankovskiy Ukrainian Communist Party Rayon Committee [raykom], dedicated his speech to questions of the activity of rural party organizations. He reported on the practice of bring into line the duties of party organization secretaries on collective and state farms, with payment of the appropriate additional compensation from the party budget, and the need for greater reliance on the nonstaff aktiv and the involvement of a wide range of communists in work on social principles.

He also raised the question of improving the work of universities of Marxism-Leninism, skills enhancement courses, and political enlightenment centers and amalgamating these institutions into single sociopolitical centers.

G.I. Zagaynov, member of the CPSU Central Control Commission, who took part in the sitting, focused his attention on improving the work of the party press.

Lieutenant Colonel G.L. Karunin, deputy commander of a military unit, devoted his speech to questions of the activity and financing of party organizations and the formation of autonomous party structures in the USSR Armed Forces.

Speakers at the commission sitting drew attention to the weakening of discipline in many party organizations, numerous cases of violation of CPSU rules on the payment of party dues, the use of that money for trivial, secondary purposes, and the delay by some primary party organizations in transferring their contributions to party committees' accounts.

The party's material support, the commission members stressed, is a Communist's statutory duty and there can be no deviations here. Primary party organizations and party committees at all levels must constantly pay attention to disciplinary questions.

N.Ye. Kruchina, CPSU Central Committee administrator of affairs, and G.G. Veselkov, deputy chairman of the CPSU Central Control Commission, spoke in the debate.

In the light of the discussion, the commission recommended that the union republic Communist Parties' draft budgets be submitted to the CPSU Central Committee plenum for approval.

Twenty Face Serious Crimes Charges

PM2401152791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Jan 91 Second Edition p 8

[Report by A. Tsvyakh under "From Competent Sources" rubric: "Retribution Arrives"]

[Text] The USSR Prosecutor's Office Information Service reports that the investigation into the case against the perpetrators of a number of particularly serious crimes in Kharkov and a number of other cities in the Ukraine and the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] is entering its concluding stage.

The Kharkov Oblast Prosecutor's Office has already arrested and instituted criminal proceedings against more than 20 people involved in the crimes. They are mainly young and generally unemployed people aged 25-30. They committed armed robberies using firearms and knives against people carrying large sums of money and valuables.

We will quote just one example. Last December a certain Semina became acquainted with M., a resident of Kharkov, on the orders of the gang leaders. She quickly gained his confidence and, in line with a prearranged plan, entered his apartment. At the appointed time Semina let the other attackers into the building. They threatened the owner with weapons and made off with cash, video equipment, and antiques, leaving him beaten and bound in the apartment. A week later they arrived in Leningrad, where their friends Grigorov, Butyrin, and Semina—whose "sociability" the robbers had exploited during the heist—were living on forged papers in an apartment on Ushinskiy Street. Fearful of their joint criminal activity being exposed, the robbers murdered all three of their accomplices.

The killers managed to carry out a further string of serious crimes before being caught. They are being charged with many murders, robberies, and other dangerous crimes.

Economic

Presidential Decree on Bank Note Withdrawal

PM2301164591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Jan 91 Second Edition p 1

[Decree "On Ceasing Acceptance for Payment of USSR Gosbank 50- and 100-Ruble Bank Notes Issued in 1961 and Limiting Cash Withdrawals from Citizens' Deposits" issued by President Mikhail Gorbachev at the Kremlin in Moscow on 22 January]

[Text] In the interests of the overwhelming majority of the country's population and the need to step up the fight against speculation, corruption, smuggling, counterfeiting, and unearned income, and with a view to normalizing monetary circulation and the consumer market, I resolve:

1. To accept the USSR Cabinet of Ministers proposals:

—that, as of 0000 on 23 January 1991, acceptance for all forms of payment of USSR Gosbank [State Bank] 50- and 100-ruble [R] bank notes issued in 1961 cease and they be exchanged for bank notes of other denominations and for R50 and R100 bank notes issued in 1991 in accordance with the procedure determined by the USSR Cabinet of Ministers;

—that a maximum limit of R500 per month be introduced in the first six months of 1991, beginning 23 January 1991, on cash withdrawals from citizens' deposits at Savings Bank and all other banking institutions;

—that a procedure be established as of 23 January 1991 which makes provision for the right of Savings Bank and other bank depositors to use their deposits to pay for goods and services without cash transfer and without restriction.

2. To ensure strict fulfillment of measures for the exchange and removal from circulation of the aforementioned bank notes:

that the USSR Gosbank, the USSR Finance Ministry, and the USSR KGB organize special groups of staffers and send them to the central (national) banks of the republics and to USSR Gosbank republic banks. That the aforementioned groups be given emergency powers to monitor the fulfillment of this decree, including assuming, where necessary, direct control of banking institutions;

that the USSR Finance Ministry and the USSR KGB organize the implementation of control over and the requisite aid at local level to banking institutions and state, cooperative, public, and other enterprises, associations, organizations, and establishments in fulfilling this decree;

that the USSR MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] and the USSR KGB step up their guard of valuables in banks and during shipment.

[Signed] USSR President M. Gorbachev

Kremlin, Moscow, 22 January 1991

Cabinet Resolution on Bank Note Exchange

PM2401123591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 23 Jan 91 Second Edition p 2

[Resolution "On Ceasing Acceptance for Payment of USSR Gosbank 50- and 100-Ruble Bank Notes First Issued in 1961, the Procedure for Exchanging Them, and Limiting Cash Withdrawals From Citizens' Deposits" issued by the USSR Cabinet of Ministers on 22 January]

[Text] In implementation of the USSR president's decree dated 22 January 1991 "On Ceasing Acceptance for Payment of USSR Gosbank [State Bank] 50- and 100- Ruble [R] Bank Notes First Issued in 1961 and Limiting Cash Withdrawals from Citizens' Deposits," the USSR Cabinet of Ministers resolves:

1. That acceptance of USSR R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 for all kinds of payment cease as of 0000 on 23 January 1991, and that banking institutions, enterprises, associations, organizations, and institutions cease issuing the aforementioned bank notes.

2. That all state, cooperative, public, and other enterprises, associations, organizations, and institutions are obliged to certify the amount of residual USSR Gosbank R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 in their cash floats at the start of the working day 23 January 1991, and to surrender them to the bank's service institution within the first three hours of the working day 23 January 1991.

That banking institutions accept the aforementioned residual bank notes on receipt of the top copy [pervyy ekzemplyar] of a properly formulated document attesting to the presence of R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 at face value, said face value to be subsequently credited to the organization's trading (current) account following verification in accordance with the procedure prescribed by the USSR Gosbank.

That, as regards cooperative and other organizations which autonomously determine their on-site cash float, when deciding questions of crediting the surrendered cash residue to the account of the cooperative (organization), the USSR Gosbank operates on the basis of the maximum on-site cash float prescribed by bank institutions for state enterprises and organizations whose activity is comparable to that of the cooperative (organization).

3. That, in order to exchange working citizens' R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961, commissions of at least five people comprising representatives of the leadership, financial and accountancy services, trade union committees, and labor collective councils be set up at enterprises, associations, institutions, and organizations.

That enterprises and organizations exchange R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 for bank notes of other denominations on the decision by the aforementioned commission only for workers on the staff of the enterprise, association, organization, or institution and also for people on temporary assignment within the three-day period 23-25 January 1991 to a sum not in excess of their average monthly wage during the last working year. The amount of money exchanged cannot exceed R1,000 per worker. One copy of the bank note exchange certificate signed by the commission's members is to be deposited with the bank's service institution.

That the enterprise or organization commission produce a separate certificate—a copy is to be deposited with the commissions responsible for exchanging bank notes of the above denominations and especially set up at rayispolkoms [rayon soviet executive committee] or gorispolkoms [city soviet executive committee]—attached to their application form in respect of R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 over and above the set limit.

That, no later than 26 January 1991, enterprises and organizations deposit with the bank's service institution all R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 that have been received from workers, along with copies of the properly formulated certificates.

That Savings Bank institutions or postal organizations making pension payments exchange pensioners' R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 for bank notes of other denominations within a limit of either R200 or the monthly pension amount, and issue an exchange certificate. R50 and R100 bank notes over and above the monthly pension amount are accepted from pensioners without exchange accompanied by an application form and a separate certificate, and are handed over to rayispolkom or gorispolkom commissions for consideration. Exchange certificates signed by officials in position of material responsibility, along with the exchanged or accepted bank notes, are deposited with the relevant bank institution no later than 26 January 1991.

That citizens absent from their permanent place of work or residence for medical treatment or vacation exchange bank notes at commissions set up in rest homes, sanatoriums, hospitals, and other prevention and treatment institutions.

That, in respect of citizens on vacation or undergoing medical treatment, the prevention and treatment institution perform the exchange of sums not exceeding R500 per person and compile a separate certificate, one copy is to be deposited with the bank's service institution. That the rest home, sanatorium, hospital, or other prevention and treatment institution remit by telegraph order the vacationer's or patient's remaining money to the enterprise, organization, or institution where the vacationer or patient works (receives a pension, subsidy) without charging for the transfer. That the treatment and prevention institution be reimbursed for the fee paid by the local financial organ from union budget funds on production of a receipt (certified copy) from the postal or telegraph enterprise. The enterprise, organization, or institution receiving the aforementioned cash transfer exchanges it in accordance with the aforementioned procedure taking into account the fact that R500 have already been exchanged. A separate certificate is produced for money in excess of the set amount, which is handed over to the rayispolkom or gorispolkom commissions for subsequent consideration. That rayispolkom or gorispolkom commissions accept applications for exchange of bank notes in respect of money transferred by citizens on vacation or undergoing treatment within a period of three days following the citizen's return to his place of work from the preventive and treatment institution.

That all other citizens deposit R50 and R100 bank notes with the rayispolkom or gorispolkom exchange commission accompanied by an application form.

That bank notes not surrendered by citizens within the three-day period, that is before 26 January 1991, are not to be exchanged.

4. That, to resolve questions relating to the exchange of R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 in excess of the set limits for exchange, rayispolkom or gorispolkom deputies' commissions be set up involving also representatives of financial, banking, and administrative organs. Within a 10-day period the commissions decide whether to exchange or refuse to exchange bank notes in response to citizens' applications on the basis of the results of an examination of the validity and legality of the sources of the income and acquisition of bank notes of the above denominations.

That an appeal against a rayispolkom or gorispolkom commission's decision to refuse to exchange bank notes can be lodged with oblast, kray, or republic deputies' commissions set up especially for this purpose. The latters' decisions are final.

5. That citizens' application forms in respect of R50 and R100 bank notes presented for exchange in excess of the set limits should indicate the bank notes' origins: The source of the income or the time and place when the aforesaid bank notes were received, along with other data and information confirming that they were legally acquired and saved. That commissions are not to consider questions of exchanging bank notes in excess of the set limits without the applicant's explaining the reasons and the grounds for this, nor applications submitted after 25 January 1991 (barring cases mentioned in Paragraph 3).

6. That, between 23 and 25 January 1991, the USSR Council of Ministers State Customs Control Main Administration not allow USSR Gosbank R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 to enter the USSR.

7. That within the period 23-25 January 1991, USSR Bank for Foreign Economic Activity institutions or institutions of banks performing foreign currency operations exchange foreign citizens' R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 and received in exchange for foreign currency to the amount appearing on receipts from USSR Bank for Foreign Economic Activity institutions.

That, as regards foreign citizens working in diplomatic, consular, and other foreign states' missions in the USSR, R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 are to be exchanged via the USSR Foreign Ministry Main Administration for Servicing the Diplomatic Corps in accordance with procedure coordinated with the USSR Gosbank.

8. That limits for the first six months of 1991 be introduced as of 23 January 1991 on cash withdrawals from citizens' deposits at all bank institutions—the USSR Savings Bank, the USSR Gosbank, central (national) banks of the republics, commercial and cooperative banks, and other banking institutions.

That it be established that a depositor has the right to withdraw no more than R500 in cash per month from his deposit account at a Savings Bank institution and only at his place of residence (work) (the aforementioned maximum norm for cash withdrawals from a deposit also extends to the period 23-31 January 1991). The aforementioned limit does not extend to noncash payments of wages and pensions into deposits.

That the USSR Gosbank and USSR Savings Bank establish a procedure for observing the maximum sum for cash withdrawal—R500 per month.

A depositor has the right to use the funds in his deposit account (savings accounts) for noncash transfers without restriction to acquire goods and pay for services, using USSR Savings Bank checks in payment, or to transfer funds from one deposit account to another.

9. That the USSR Gosbank adopt decisions on questions regarding the procedure for accepting, surrendering, and paying R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961 into bank accounts.

10. That, to ensure strict fulfillment of the measures to exchange and withdraw from circulation R50 and R100 bank notes first issued in 1961, the USSR Gosbank, the USSR Finance Ministry, and the USSR KGB organize and post to the republics' central (national) banks and USSR Gosbank republic banks special groups of staffers vested with emergency powers to monitor fulfillment of the USSR president's decree and this resolution, including the right to assume, where necessary, direct management of banking institutions.

That the USSR Finance Ministry and the USSR KGB organize the monitoring of this resolution's implementation and provide the requisite aid at local level to bank institutions and state, cooperative, public, and other enterprises, associations, organizations, and institutions in its implementation.

That the USSR MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] and the USSR KGB take measures to step up the safe keeping of valuables in banks and in transit.

[Signed] Prime Minister V. Pavlov

M. Shkabardnya, administrator of affairs

State Bank Says No Extension

LD2401193891 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 24 Jan 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] We have just received the following TASS announcement:

The USSR State Bank Gosbank, has been getting reports that certain republics and regions are adopting decisions to extend the period for the acceptance from the population of 50 and 100 ruble banknotes of the 1961 pattern and decisions on setting amounts differing from those envisaged in the decision of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers for the exchange of the aforementioned banknotes without applications by citizens.

As is well-known, the announcement says, the presidential decree of 22 January was adopted in the interests of the overwhelming majority of the country's population aimed at normalizing the consumer market and is directed at intensifying the fight against speculation, corruption, smuggling, banknote forgery, and nonlabor income. One is reminded once again that the Cabinet of Ministers' decision that was issued in furtherance of the decree contains a provision that the handing in by the population of 50 and 100 ruble banknotes of the 1961 pattern is taking place over three days from 23 to 25 January. After the expiry of this period, banknotes are not to be accepted for exchange—I stress, are not to be accepted—except for the cases envisaged directly in the decision of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers. They are declared illegal modes of payment and are to be taken out of circulation.

It is thus emphasized that decisions by any bodies to extent the periods for the population to hand in the aforementioned banknotes for exchange and decisions on setting different amounts for the exchange of 50 and 100 ruble banknotes of the 1961 pattern without applications by citizens, other than those stipulated by the decision of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers, are unlawful and directed in effect at undermining the aims outlined by the presidential decree. Bank institutions must not implement them.

All enterprises, associations, organizations, and institutions must strictly be guided by the instructions set out in the decision of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers and bear in mind that any deviation from them is a most flagrant violation of state and financial discipline.

The USSR Gosbank will take all necessary measures to carry out the aforementioned decisions right through to terminating the validity of the licences of bank institutions and the cancellation of unauthorized operations. The above is a TASS announcement.

Golik Notes Reaction to Banknote Decree

LD2401225291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Interview with Yuriy Vladimirovich Golik, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Law and Order and Battle Against Crime Committee, by correspondent V. Stepanyuk, place and date not given; from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded]

[Text] As is known, one of the main aims of the exchange of banknotes was to strike a sudden and palpable blow at the shadow economy. How effective can it be? Our correspondent discusses this with Yuriy Vladimirovich Golik, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Law and Order and Battle Against Crime Committee.

[Begin recording] [V. Stepanyuk] Yuriy Vladimirovich, I would like to ask you, precisely why was this option of sudden exchange of banknotes chosen?

[Golik] Well, I can reply to this as someone who is involved with questions of the struggle against crime. And from the point of view of the struggle against the shadow economy, it is the most effective and, in essence, the only possible option for confiscating money gained by criminal means. And I, as chairman of a committee of the Supreme Soviet, am impressed precisely by the short-lived nature of this option.

When it was suggested that it be put out for broad discussion or introduced after discussion in the Supreme Soviet of the republics, this would have really put an end to the question of a struggle agianst the shadow economy. And the effect we are obtaining and are already starting to obtain now—by means of the suddenness of application—would not have been achieved.

[Stepanyuk] Are there any reports about the way those in the shadow economy have reacted to the presidential decree?

[Golik] Yes, there are. In general, they have reacted in the way we expected. They were alarmed and panicked. But, the fact that they are panicking is unimportant. How is this being expressed? By the fact that 100 ruble notes yesterday morning already cost 75 rubles, whereas, as you know, previously they cost more than face value, about 115 rubles, and it is said that at certain periods the cost even went up to 125 rubles. Anyway, yesterday morning they cost 75 rubles; by lunchtime their cost fell to 50 rubles; by evening to 25 rubles; and by late evening one note for 10 rubles. I think that tomorrow morning by lunchtime they will go for 3 rubles.

That is one of the variants of this reaction. Then, how else can one follow such things? At railway stations and at airports, all tickets heading south have disappeared. That is, people whose cash is at home are trying to get away in order to save at least something. At the railway stations this afternoon the price for tickets for certain directions had risen twenty-fold. The main thing is to get away where one can.

And a hasty search for exchangers has begun, for people who can exchange this money, allegedly on their own behalf, but really not for themselves but for someone else. And this sort of search is going on, just as we are investigating these things. And wherever possible we put an end to it. Of course, a certain proportion of the money will be laundered and a certain amount of the money will be saved, but it will not be possible to save billions. This is impossible in principle to fit into this period, in three days.

[Stepanyuk] Will not people, honest people, suffer if they are at present fishing out at sea and do not have the possibility of changing money during these days?

[Golik] No, this must not be allowed to happen at all. And in those places where it is not possible to get it done in these three days, the Cabinet of Ministers has worked out such decisions and they will be put to the operatives in good time and people who have got their money by honest labor can rest assured. Their rubles should not suffer in any way. [end recording]

Gosbanka Chairman Explains Currency Reform

LD2301220491 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Interview with USSR State Bank Chairman Viktor Gerashchenko by correspondent L. Khatayevich on 23 January; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Khatayevich] The USSR prime minister spoke yesterday on the "Vremya" program. The president's decree has been published in the newspapers. But nonetheless, to judge by the reaction of the population there are still many questions that are unclear and puzzling to people. Therefore let us start our conversation with fundamental things by talking about why, what for, and how.

[Gerashchenko] The preparations for such a transitional stage to the market economy have drastically activated the figures in the shadow, as we say, gray economy in our country. Therefore the transition to market relations, the denationalization demands a certain, I would say, adequate and even approach by everyone to these changes. Therefore, it seemed to us that in carrying out purely technical work, in introducing new banknotes with better coloring, more difficult to forge, we could precisely with these banknotes, precisely the large denominations—and it is precisely with them that the shadow economy frequently operates—carry out and, I would say, actions to remove such unearned incomes. Naturally, this action is not directed at infringing on the working people, that is those who work and live, as we say, from pay day to pay day. This should in no way be called a monetry reform, this demand is sometimes made by some economists and public and political figures.

[Khatayevich] There they defined very, strict time scales for carrying out this action.

[Gerashchenko] You know, I would say that there we sometimes confuse concepts slightly. Three days have been determined for any person to come and hand over the banknotes. It is not obligatory that he should receive kopeck for kopeck, as they say, right here on the spot. And, so to speak, the exchange can be effected by them not in these three days, but later, and those sums which exceed the average monthly earnings...

[Khatayevich, interrupting] My next question...

[Gerashchenko, continuing]...and these sums, should ideally be confirmed by commissions of the district or town soviets, they will later be credited to an account.

[Khatayevich] If a person hands in money at an enterprise, and if this money exceeds the amount of banknotes he is permitted to exchange...

[Gerashchenko, interrupting] His average monthly income...

[Khatayevich, continuing]...then he should go on to sort things out with a commission of the district executive committee?

[Gerashchenko] Note is taken of the difference by a separate department and from his application. Let's say, he had taken money out of his account, or he had received holiday money, or received some kind of bonus. I think that first as a rule the working collectives knows who works among them. They can also render the necessary backup for such an application and on the whole we feel sure that the soviets of people's deputies will not make any kind of erroneous... [Khatayevich, interrupting] That means that...

[Gerashchenko] First there should be common sense here and in general conscience.

[Khatayevich] But those are shaky concepts.

[Gerashchenko] I understand that these are shaky concepts, but the fact is that, as we know, there is sufficient abuse at the present time in our country. And the main mass of the population does in general suffer as a result of these abuses.

[Khatayevich] Yet another question. Pensioners. Today as I was going to work, I saw about 200 people in a queue outside our savings bank that is in the ground floor of our apartment block. They understood that those 200 rubles that pensioners are permitted to exchange for new banknotes, they should receive at the place where they get their pension. The place where they get their pension is the savings bank. Isn't that true?

[Gerashchenko] Or at the post office.

[Khatayevich] Or at the post office. If I were to take these banknotes to the shop, could I buy something with them?

[Gerashchenko] If there are goods in the shop, then I hope you would be able to.

[Khatayevich] Yet another question. Won't the action with large demonination banknotes be followed by a similar operation with smaller denomination ones.

[Gerashchenko] I swear that it won't.

[Khatayevich] Thank you.

Further on Currency Reform

PM2401170191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 24 Jan 91 Union Edition p 2

[Interview with V. Gerashchenko, chairman of the USSR State Bank Board, by I. Zhagel; place and date not given: "V. Gerashchenko: It Is Too Early to Make Generalizations"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] For over a year, statements advocating various options of monetary reform have been made in the parliaments of the republics and the country, on newspaper pages, and from television screens. Nevertheless the government decision on the partial exchange of bank notes came as a surprise to many people. In this connection IZVESTIYA's correspondent met V. Gerashchenko, chairman of the USSR State Bank [Gosbank] Board, and asked him to answer some questions that are of interest to us.

[Zhagel] Viktor Vladimirovich, I had to go through a large crowd just to get inside the USSR Gosbank. The news is that on the morning of 23 January waiting lines formed outside most savings bank branches. Therefore I would like to hear once again from you the aims of the intended action—whose interests is it meant to protect and against whom is it directed?

[Gerashchenko] Here I can only repeat what the decree by the country's president says. The exchange of 50- and 100-ruble [R] notes is just one component of the struggle against speculation, corruption, smuggling, counterfeiting, and unearned incomes.

Furthermore, the confiscation of illegally earned funds will undoubtedly affect the normalization of monetary circulation and will promote the stabilization of the consumer market. So that the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population will only gain from it.

[Zhagel] However, you must agree that pensioners also keep their savings "in mattresses" in large denominations? And some people have put aside money to make a major purchase, but have not been able to do so. What about them?

[Gerashchenko] Of course there is a multitude of situations here. However, I believe that the relevant USSR Cabinet of Ministers resolution will make it possible to resolve these situations without damaging the interests of individual citizens. If you have a sum of money in large denominations that does not exceed your average monthly earnings, then it will be exchanged without fail. If it is above the set limits, money will be exchanged on the decision by special commissions created at rayispolkoms [rayon soviet executive committees] or gorispolkoms [city soviet executive committees]. If you prove the legitimate acquisition of these bank notes, then there will be no problem. It is possible to appeal against the commission's decisions.

I repeat once more: For the overwhelming majority of citizens, the exchange of large denominations will not cause any trouble. Although, life is so varied that you cannot completely eliminate the possibility of irregularities. However, it would be dangerous to make generalizations in advance based on individual cases, or to try and discredit one of the government's most serious actions which should bring considerable advantages to the whole economy.

[Zhagel] Let us look at these advantages. Have you tried to quantify in rubles, so to speak, the results of the measures that are now being implemented?

[Gerashchenko] Undoubtedly the preparation to exchange large bank notes has included such an assessment. However, I would not like to name any specific figures today, on the first day. Too many factors may have an effect on them. Especially unpredictable factors that have little to do with economics.

Let us return to this question in a few days' time. I promise to inform IZVESTIYA readers in detail and efficiently of the progress of all the measures undertaken and their results.

[Zhagel] How many notes will have to be exchanged altogether?

[Gerashchenko] At the beginning of the year, approximately 34 percent of the money in circulation was in the form of R50 and R100 notes.

[Zhagel] Have replacement notes been printed for the full amount? Will problems connected with a shortage of paper money not arise now?

[Gerashchenko] Not all the new bank notes have been printed yet, but I do not think that there will be any irregularities with ready money. Incidentally, the restrictions on withdrawal of funds kept in savings banks are largely and actually due to not wanting paper money to accumulate in people's hands. However, if someone wants to, or to put it another way, if someone has the opportunity to make some kind of major purchase, then they can use a check.

[Zhagel] Are you sure that the representatives of the shadow economy have not exchanged their money already? Wasn't there a leak of information to them?

[Gerashchenko] At the beginning of December of last year a certain activeness was noted in the handing in of large denominations. However, it did not last long and I believe that the representatives of the shadow economy did not manage to get rid of the funds they had accumulated.

As for the circle of people who knew about the impending reform, it was extremely restricted. Although the engravers who prepared the matrices, and the printers knew about it.

[Zhagel] It is well known that the USSR Cabinet of Ministers resolution came as a surprise both to the Russian Government and the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Gosbank. Will this not cause fresh complications in mutual relations between the center and the republics?

[Gerashchenko] Yes, we have already had reports to the effect that there has been an ambiguous reaction to the decision on the reform's implementation in the republics. However, the fact that we did not let them know is fully justified. The matter could have been jeopardized if the circle of people involved had been extended.

Savings Bank Official on Money Exchange

LD2301110891 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0930 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Text] The decree of the USSR president and the decision of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers published yesterday remain, of course, at the center of attention of all of you, dear listeners. But these documents are also generating countless questions, manifested by the endless calls to our editorial office. Our correspondent Valeriy Kiosa has just been on the phone to (Vyacheslav Solovev), first deputy chairman of the Board of the USSR Savings Bank, and asked him to answer a number of questions.

[Begin recording] [Kiosa] How will the exchange of money be conducted at the USSR Savings Bank.

[(Solovev)] The exchange of money will be carried out, first of all, not only and not so much at the USSR Savings Bank. Money will be exchanged in the USSR Savings Bank only for a restricted number of categories of people. More precisely, we are talking about pensioners receiving pensions through Savings Bank establishments. These are personal pensioners, Defense Ministry pensioners, and military pensioners, that is, of the Interior Ministry [MVD] and KGB. The exchange of money for all other citizens is being carried out through enterprises, organizations and institutions, that is, at the places where they receive their incomes.

[Kiosa] Vyacheslav Ivanovich, as I was coming to work just now, I saw huge lines outside virtually all branches of the Savings Bank. Does this mean that those people who are now standing there should perhaps not be doing so because the Savings Bank will not serve them?

[(Solovev)] You are probably right because the situation today is such that many people are standing in line who have not properly acquainted themselves either with the president's decree or with the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers and who have no idea, as they say, of the whole procedure regarding the exchange of banknotes worth 50 rubles [R] and R100. Evidently, the general situation we have with regard to informing the population today does not create the best basis for carrying out such a highly crucial undertaking as the exchange of large denomination banknotes. But I think that it is very important for our listeners to bear the following in mind. One should probably react calmly to those conflict situations arising today, 23 January, bearing in mind that the handing in of these notes should be carried out in the course of three days; tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow.

[Kiosa] The decision states that pensioners will have sums exchanged up to R200 or within the limits of the monthly pension. But you and I are very well aware that many elderly people have slightly larger amounts kept at home for emergencies, so to speak. What should they do?

[(Solovev)] Pensioners are in exactly the same position as all other citizens of the country, who can exchange amounts within the limits of their average monthly salary. But this does not mean that sums which a person has in the form of R50 and R100 banknotes will not be exchanged for him. Let's say, I can have R5,000 or R1,000. I hand it in to the cash office of my enterprise. A pensioner hands it in to a branch of the Savings Bank, as does a military pensioner. He will immediately be given a sum in exchange, within the limits of his monthly pension, and the remaining money will be accepted and he will be given a document stating that the money has been received and the matter of a subsequent exchange or, it might be a deposit—a decision by the executive committee will determine whether the remaining sum will be exchanged or entered into a deposit, at the wish of the person.

[Kiosa] This concerns pensioners in other categories as well, as I understand it?

[(Solovev]) Of course, of course. This concerns any citizen of our country in full. Under no circumstances should it be thought that people will have only their salaries exchanged and all remaining money will be lost. It needs to be checked whether this money is earned through work or not.

[Kiosa] Are you sure that three days will be sufficient to resolve this most difficult problem?

[(Solovev)] My view is that we will probably not be able to solve all problems in three days. I think some kind of flexible mechanism will have to be found to deal with matters of a purely technical nature affecting the time and interests of tens and hundreds of millions of our citizens, without sacrificing the aims of carrying out this kind of money exchange operation. [end recording]

Analyst Terms Money Decree 'Important Step'

LD2301130291 Moscow TASS in English 1240 GMT 23 Jan 91

[By TASS analyst Andrey Orlov]

[Text] Moscow January 23 TASS—Many Soviet people experienced stock exchange panic for the first time on Tuesday evening when a newsreader on Soviet Television read out a decree by the Soviet president on the withdrawal from circulation of 50- and 100-rouble banknotes and partially freezing personal savings accounts.

In the early hours of this morning people began queuing at Soviet banks branches in an attempt to exchange their banknotes.

The Soviet Government clearly decided that the confiscation version of monetary reform was the most efficient and less expensive version at its disposal.

The withdrawal of a considerable amount of cash from circulation, accompanied by the payment of only 500 roubles per month from personal savings accounts (with average monthly pay under 300 roubles) will lead to the compaction of cash in circulation, partially normalise circulation and raise the purchasing power of the rouble.

The idea of monetary reform has been debated over the past few months. Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, the former finance minister, staunchly rebuffed attacks of both populists, who advocated monetary reform as an instrument of struggle against the shadow economy, and radical economists who demanded the exchange of money as a condition for the transition to market relations.

Pavlov succeeded in explaining the senseless nature of a direct money exchange, the cost of which could have surpassed the expected effect.

The move made by the new prime minister will achieve more with lower costs. The reduction of money in circulation (according to some estimates amounting to 25-33 per cent) will help decrease excessive demand on the consumer market, retard inflation, beat down prices on the currency black market and indirectly stabilise the rouble vis-a-vis hard currencies.

Another aim is "to cut off" rouble reserves smuggled abroad and to seal off channels of illegal money circulation, since businessmen of the shadow economy traditionally use large denomination banknotes in their settlements.

A real alternative to large-scale price hikes as a basis for economic stabilisation has appeared in the country for the first time since 1985. (Although many economists believe it will be necessary to raise prices in the near future all the same.)

Inconsistency is one of a few drawbacks of the reform. The three days during which the exchange of bills is to be completed may paralyse the economy while waged and salaried workers will exchange their banknotes.

This, in fact, may offset the effect of the reform. It is also unclear how the population, above all pensioners and disabled people, will respond to the reform, since they will absorb the main blow.

Some may challenge the social justice of the president's decree, but they cannot say that the Soviet leadership remains idle while the country stands on the brink of total economic collapse.

An important step has been taken to stabilise the country's economy.

MVD Official Says Decree Targets Mafia

LD2501045691 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1855 GMT 24 Jan 91

[interview with Aleksandr Ivanovich Gurov, head of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs Directorate for Combating Organized Crime, by correspondent Valeriy Golubev in Moscow—live or recorded]

[Text] [Golubev] I do not think there is any need for me to spend a lot of time introducing Aleksandr Ivanovich Gurov, doctor of juridical science. He was the first person in our country to draw attention to the phenomenon of organized crime. Aleksandr Ivanovich and I have gotten together in the studio to discuss the president's decree on the exchange of 100 ruble [R] and R50 banknotes. This measure was a bolt from the blue, so to speak, not just for ordinary people like ourselves but also for high-ranking financial executives and bankers. Nevertheless, the public is suggesting that the black- marketeers, the sharks of the black market, were prepared for this and managed to exchange their wooden million, so to speak, or convert them into valuable articles. What is your view of this?

[Gurov] The fact that it came like a bolt from the blue is not a bad thing. Obviously, the tactics of such a measure have to be arranged this way. Otherwise it simply would not work. In view of the information possessed by the law enforcement organs, I cannot agree that the black-marketeers, racketeers, and mafia found out about this at some stage and managed to take steps to preserve their capital. Most of the operational and official information shows that the majority of these people did not know about the deadline, the decree itself, or the banknotes that would have to be exchanged. Therefore, they began to take all kinds of steps. The panic outside the Main Post Office began as they tried to send each other sums of money in the hope that somebody else would be able to exchange them. Immediately they took steps to create dead souls at various enterprises and factories. Fortunately, the management and the public at these enterprises and factories put a stop to this without delay.

We also know that the ground is burning under these people at the moment. They have been forced to send huge sums of money, tens of millions, to regions where they believe it will be possibe to change money without difficulty.

[Golubev] Where the deadline has been extended?

[Gurov] Yes. But not only there, but also to places where they believe they have contacts, where corruption in the banking system will enable them to do this. But the law enforcement organs know about this. Naturally, preventive measures will be taken. The upshot of all this is that on 23 January we noticed—my officers noticed—that, initially, the black market sharks vanished from the markets in Moscow because of these currency questions. They rushed off to discuss them, because panic...

[Golubev, interrupting] There was panic on the black market.

[Gurov] Yes, there was panic on the black market. Then, they began selling off their R100 notes. It was paradoxical to see R100 being sold for R10.

[Golubev] Previously they had been buying them up.

[Gurov] Yes, that's the whole point. Previously they had been buying up these notes to have imposing sums of money. What do we mean by imposing sums of money? All the big mafiosi—and not only the mafiosi but also self-respecting pickpockets and cardsharks—have what they call imposing sums of money. They vary from R5,000 to R10,000, and are kept in banknotes of R50 and R100. These people have also suffered. Cardsharks and swindlers have suffered. Many have suffered, even those criminals serving prison sentences who have buried similar sums of money and are hoping to retrieve them and live in clover once again. These people have also suffered.

We know that these Mafia groupings are racking their brains to find places where they can sell off this money, ways to get rid of it. We know of some specific cases, the unprecedented activities where individual enterprises are involved. For example, the Armavir meat combine handed in a residual sum amounting to 450,000. Guess what denominations the money was in? Only R100 notes. If only that was the only example. The Krasnoyarsk liqueur and vodka works handed in an outstanding R260,000. And what notes do you think they used? Only...

[Golubev, interrupting] Just the same.

[Gurov] Just the same. But if this was only factories, that would be one thing. But the cooperatives are also involved. Take the Konkurent cooperative, for example. Although it only has R1,000 in its account, it contrived to hand in R190,000 for exchange. One shop in Novosibirsk, whose takings are R10,000 a day, contrived to hand in R240,000 for exchange. It goes without saying that this money will be credited to account 904—you know about it—where it will be investigated by the competent organs. Obviously, this money was not earned honestly.

[Golubev] So, every R100 or R50 note has to be declared.

[Gurov] Unquestionably. Of course, Unquestionably. Why should we get excited about this? In my directorate, for example, we did a quick check. Nobody had more than R500 on them. I do not think a worker has much to worry about in this respect.

A lot of capital that had been deposited abroad has been affected. Experts estimate that about R12 (billion) is affected, and this is also in banknotes of R50-R100. Obviously you don't know, but we know that the mafia bought up this money, in R50-R100 notes—they paid for it, bought it up and then sent it abroad, intending to change it into dollars, and also to buy up Soviet factories and plants from over there, if privatization were to get underway. In this case, the blow was also struck at the foreign branches, so to speak, of...

[Golubev, interrupting] Of our Soviet mafia.

[Gurov] Yes, our Soviet mafia. So, we are very pleased that this has happened. We are very pleased. Finally, another group who have been hit are officials who had large sums of money at their disposal for bribing other officials. They too are now obliged to explain, somehow, where they got this money from.

I am certainly not suggesting that the entire mafia, all the racketeers, so to speak, have suffered as a result of this. Certainly not. Some of them, especially those who kept their money in bank accounts and so on, have preserved their capital. But most of them—a significant part of them—have suffered a very painful, serious blow. After all, look at what has happened. I commissioned a report on the operational situation. This is authenticated information. What does it tell us? Thieves who operate within the law gathered to discuss the situation all over the country, after the adoption of the decree. I'm now talking about a different section of the mafia, not the racketeers and black-marketeers we spoke about before. I'm talking about the thieves who operate within the law, the ones who are, basically, supermen, big-time mafiosi, big-time leaders, leaders of groupings. These thieves got together, both the ones at liberty and the ones behind the wire. They discussed ways of selling off, exchanging this money, of getting it beyond the wire. Let me read the report verbatim. The thieves made the following decision. Where loot has to be smuggled out illegally, permission was given for administrators of corrective labor establishments to be offered bribes of up to 25 percent of the total sum involved.

[Golubev] A quarter.

[Gurov] A quarter of the entire sum is authorized for bribing the administration. Well, since we already know about this, since our people in the field know about this, I think this trick will also fail.

Current information also indicates that the criminal world will attempt to change its money mainly in those places where the deadline has been extended. The deadline has been extended in those places because of objective need. But I think that deputies, the administration, and the local authorities must be very, very vigilant. If a flood of this money inundates those places, I think the local population for whom the extension was primarily intended will suffer.

[Golubev] Aleksandr Ivanovich, just one fact, one action, one aspect of the president's actions has evoked this whirlwind, so to speak, in the thieving world, the world of organized crime.

[Gurov] Yes.

[Golubev] They are also trying to resist this in an organized way.

[Gurov] Unquestionably.

[Golubev] So the question arises—it's a terrible thing to have to ask—is organized crime really so powerful that there is no way of fighting it, that we just cannot cope with it?

[Gurov] Organized crime in the USSR is, unquestionably, a powerful force. We won't talk about that now. A lot has been written about this. I would compare this blow, the president's blow, to a middling punch from a boxer. After all, the range of measures we can take against organized crime includes still more powerful blows. But this blow has shown how the ground can burn under their feet. It has shown that they are also disorganized in some respects, although they are regrouping very fast. Therefore, the second blow, in my view, must be the creation of a system for combating organized crime. I will not say much about this. In this case I will again rely on the president's own words. He has said that to combat organized crime, we need special structures. So, who is preventing this from happening? Let's set them up. My own directorate is ready to take this responsibility upon itself, to expand its operations to take on these functions. We are now setting up these subunits in 12 regions. It is very hard going because of the struggle between different sovereignties. Russia is detaching itself from this, for some reason. However, Belorussia has, in this instance, reciprocated.

Kazakhstan: the president has intervened himself seeing the danger of the problem. Well, if we could organize ourselves a closely knit system of the FBI-type, plus a block of laws—a law to combat organized crime—this is of the American (RICO) law-type.

By the way, we were visited today by colleagues from the Ukraine. Three days ago we had visitors from Kazakhstan. They want to create a local system of the (RICO) type. The understand that this is a bluff. The law must be a federal one. And here you have a system: a federal law to combat organized crime that includes a whole range of norms in combating crime and the creation of a system.

[Golubev] Aleksander Ivanovich...

[Gurov, interrupting] Thus, I beg your pardon, we add economic sanctions and we drive organized crime into its traditional limits preventing if from spreading like an octopus.

[Golubev] But we hear all the time that in order to make a system work it needs professional, manpower is needed. But we hear all the time from the MVD bodies, almost an oath, that there are not enough professionals, money, that there is not enough of this and that.

[Gurov] No such thing. No such thing. No such thing. There are professionals. The professionals are leaving the MVD only because they have reached the limit of their patience, because they are not socially protected, because the former Council of Ministers was extremely long in making its decisions. I would say that it was feloniously long in making decisions when life has already made the decisions.

I think that it should not be done this way today and that is why I cannot agree that there are not enough specialists in the MVD.

There are a lot of specialists in the MVD. Take, for instance, my directorate. Take the directorate for the prevention of economic crimes. Take the CID [Criminal Investigation Division]. There are enough specialists in these departments. They only have to be given work, normal and true work—not paperwork—normal work and they will work. As for technical equipment, it also does exist. And we can also buy it somewhere. Well, everything should be undertaken with an effort. As we abruptly carried out the first blow, so we should not go back on this.

[Golubev] The bandit decree as it was called by the bandits.

[Gurov] Ah, yes. The most interesting thing is that when this decree was discussed in the criminal world it was called the bandit decree. I think that this is high appraisal of the decree on behalf of the criminal elements. Why is it a bandit one? Because it has delivered a blow to them. It has undermined their economy. But I don't quite understand why Deputy Kuznetsov also caled it a bandit one at the morning session. When one and the same thing is heard from a people's deputy and a mafiosi, then I simply don't understand what the poor fellow is led by. [Golubev] Well, I would like to—it is popular to say so nowadays—to finish the conversation on an optimistic note. Though we have a lot of gloom around us, let's put it this way, nevertheless: I see that—this is not the first time I am meeting you, not only here at the television studio, but also on the pages of newspapers—professionals like you are able, probably, to turn the situation for the better. Are able to turn the situation for the better. And we must say will, in general, turn the situation for the better. How much longer are we going to stand such a situation?

[Gurov] We must turn the situation for the better because we will be forced to do so by the people. And all these political ambitions about sovereignty and so on. One should understand that political sovereignty is one thing, economic sovereignty is one thing, but crime does not recognize any borders. The whole of the civilized world is combating crime within the framework of UNESCO, Interpol, and it is only we, in this country, who are trying to fight organized crime without a unified system. Crime takes advantage of this because it does not know any borders and does not recognize this kind of sovereignty. So, it is possible to overpower it. But this can be done only with the help of an organization.

You have been convinced from these small examples—I could give you scores, hundreds of examples—that we do handle information and handle it in a good way, I mean the law enforcement bodies. Not only my small directorate—I am representing here, in this case, the law enforcement bodies.

[Golubev] And efforts should, probably, really be united in this case. Well, sovereign rights, so to speak, of the republics are their sovereign rights.

[Gurov] They are their sovereign rights. It goes without saying. It goes without saying.

[Golubev] Nevertheless, you are right in saying that crime does not recognize any borders. And here, probably, everything should be put aside and all the forces arranged to eliminate organized crime.

[Gurov] I can give you a simple example: Bad things, let's call it that, are going on, in Lithuania, in the Baltic region—the nationality conflict. It's actually going on there now. Nevertheless, operatives visit us because we are working on one of the largest mafia cases. We are working on it together with Lithuania and it has no influence on us—on the operatives of our service and on the operatives of the Lithuanian sixth service. Because we have to eliminate this extremely strong grouping that is of extraordinary danger to the public both in Lithuania—because it is causing economic, I would even say, political harm—as well as in Russia. In this instance, we are working as a central body, but we are also working for Russia.

For instance, we have no excesses with Moldovia, I mean here again our subunit. They ask us for help. I ask them for help, because we have one thing to do, one thing to do.

By the way, the criminals do not have any national issues. I have already given this example when there was a meeting in one of the prisons where it was said that a nationality conflict should not be allowed to interfere in the work of the professional criminal core because this would lead to a division in it. So, the criminals understand this well. And we also understand this well. It would be good if the political figures understand this.

[Golubev] This should be done at a high, civilized, professional level.

[Gurov] Of course. It goes without saying.

[Golubev] I wish you success, Alexandr Ivanovich. Thank you for coming to the television studio. Best wishes to you.

[Gurov] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, very much.

Converted Enterprise Operating With Difficulty

PM2401102791 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 20 Jan 91

[Report by V. Bakarinov and V. Safonov; from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] [Announcer] Our correspondent reports on the progress of conversion at a defense industry enterprise.

[Bakarinov] A few years ago we would not only not have been allowed to film at this enterprise, we would not even have been admitted. However, as you can see, the concept of conversion has come into effect and the situation has changed. But of course, the main point is not that journalists have been admitted to this defense industry enterprise. It is much more important what goods are being produced here, how many, and for whom.

As for the product range, judge for yourselves. But that is by no means all. The plant supplies more than 5,000 clients in the USSR and 46 countries of the world. We are constantly being overmodest. We are overawed by the achievements of foreign companies. But take these tubes, for instance, we could sell as many as we can produce to U.S. clients.

Tell me, how are conversion and the market compatible?

[N.G. Kuzmin, general director of the "Reflektor" Production Association] Well, it is impossible to master conversion without securing a major share of the market. Therefore, our first task was to gear our output to the needs of the market. Primarily the union market, of course. And, most importantly, to increase the output of consumer goods manufactured from the basic components we produce.

All this has enabled us not only to compensate for output losses brought about by conversion, but also to considerably increase our output volume thanks to the production of consumer goods.

[Bakarinov] How do you manage to stay afloat in a situation characterized by raw material shortages?

[Kuzmin] With great difficulty. And the reason is understandable. The centralized supply system is virtually defunct. What remains is confined to state orders. Meanwhile horizontal ties, that is to say the transition to direct contracts, have not yet materialized. The establishment of mutual respect between partners is of utmost importance here.

Albalkin Comments on Economic Reforms

LD2401214791 Moscow TASS in English 2117 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS World Service observer Andrey Orlov]

[Text] Moscow January 24 TASS—No radical reforms can be implemented in the country without public accord, Leonid Abalkin, former deputy chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers, told TASS. His opinion is based on the experience of 18 months of work in the government. The need for ensuring "proper relationship between the responsibility and prerogatives of the architects of perestroika" was another lesson he learned. He said that, although he personally was responsible for the implementation of the economic reform in the country, the State Planning Committee, the Finance Ministry and the State Committee for Material and Technical Supply, playing a decisive part in the national economy, were outside the sphere of his competence.

Abalkin, who was the most popular economist in the country during the first years of perestroika, was the first to warn in 1988 about the impending economic crisis. During the past several months, however, he has been a symbol of conservatism. When Abalkin was appointed deputy prime minister in mid-1989, many observers warned him that conservatives could make him a scapegoat and blame him for all failures in the economic policy. Now he intends to write a book and to analyse in it the experience of his work in the government.

Abalkin explained his consent to joining the Ryzhkov government by "the desire to influence the Council of Ministers from the inside". He believes that one of his main accomplishments during that period was that he managed to "put the idea of the market into the heads of the leaders and people in general". At the same time, he believes that the population is still not ready for the market. "People's mentality is based on myths. People expect a miracle from the market or, at least, an extremely rapid improvement of the situation," he said.

Abalkin mentioned two reasons why the president, who at first supported the 500 days programme, but finally rejected it. [sentence as received] The first reason is that the programme actually meant the disintegration of the Soviet Union as a single state. The second one was that the president was losing a real power structure. "On the initial stage Gorbachev either did not understand it, or lost the nerve. Later he realised that he personally was losing everything. The 500 days programme did not envisage a cabinet or a Council of Ministers. He also realised that people in general do not want the disintegration of the union, that speeches of a small number of publicists, journalists and people's deputies do not coincide with the opinion of the nation. He realised as well, that despite his low rating on this issue, he retains an opportunity to appeal directly to the nation. This is what the president is doing, in a way, with the help of the referendum," Abalkin said.

Speaking about the schedule for the transition to a market-based system, which, in his opinion, should be observed by the new Cabinet of Ministers, Abalkin divided the transition into three periods—one year, five years and thirty years. The first period, "the entry into the market", will witness the completion of a legal basis, needed for the functioning of subjects of the market, and the creation of the initial infrastructure—stock exchanges, banks and so on.

The second stage will include "the creation of a critical mass of the market", specifically, a real demonopolisation of the economy and the introduction of the convertibility of the rouble. The results comparable with what has already been achieved in the West—the abundance of goods in shops, competition, an economic structure susceptible to scientific and technological progress and, which is especially important, the formation of a market-oriented mentality will take up no less than 30 years, or a generation.

Responding to the question if he would agree to join the new cabinet, Abalkin answered in the negative. "I asked a year and a half to implement the reforms. The time has passed, and no matter that proper working conditions were not created for us. The results are obvious, and I have no moral right to remain in the government," Abalkin said. At the same time, he is not going to give up the work on the reform.

Port of Vanino To Serve Foreign Ships

LD2401121691 Moscow TASS in English 1200 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS correspondent Yuriy Vitrishchak]

[Text] Vanino January 24 TASS—The Soviet Far Eastern port Vanino will now receive and serve foreign ships, according to a Soviet governmental decision.

Four other ports—Kerch, Kaliningrad, Nikolaevsk, Korsakov—have also been opened to foreign ships.

Until recently, the Nakhodka and Vostochny ports in the Soviet Far East handled the bulk of freight turnover from abroad. However, the recent growth in foreign trade turnover and difficulties on the trans-Siberian railroad—the main route to transfer freight from southeastern Asia to Europe—have motivated the opening of Vanino to foreign ships.

Vanino meets international standards and can receive ships of all types. A new terminal, now under construction, will double its capacity.

Military

Army Ordered To Take on Public Order Duties

AU2501121691 Paris AFP in English 1155 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Text] Moscow, Jan 25 (AFP)—Joint armed patrols of police and soldiers backed by armoured vehicles are to be mobilised in Moscow and prinicpal cities throughout the Soviet Union from February 1, INTERFAX news agency said Friday.

The order was signed by Defence Minister Dmitriy Yazov and Interior Minister Boris Pugo.

It is the first time the Soviet Army has been called on to undertake routine public order duties.

Ministry Denies Army Possesses Explosive Bullets

LD2401102291 Moscow TASS in English 1010 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Moscow January 24 TASS—The Soviet Army does not have and has never used explosive bullets or bullets with a shortened or incised jacket, capable of easily turning or getting flattened in a human body, the KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (Red Star) newspaper writes today, referring to the Soviet Defence Ministry's main missile and artillery department.

Such bullets, which inflict particularly serious wounds, were banned by the first peace conference in The Hague, the newspaper recalls. It also emphasised that "the Soviet Armed Forces' current manual for the application of the norms of international humanitarian law also bans the use of such bullets."

The newspaper refutes the statement by People's Deputy Anatoliy Sobchak that ammunition with dum-dum bullets are in service with Soviet paratroopers. Sobchak made this claim during a Leningrad Television appearance earlier this month.

"The cartridge for the AK-74, AKS-74, AKS-74U, which are in service with the Soviet Army, is provided with an ordinary bullet of 3.45 mm calibre and does not fundamentally differ from NATO's standard cartridge of 5.56 mm calibre," states a reference note the newspaper received from the Soviet Defence Ministry.

Military Scientists Reject Republic Armies

PM2501100091 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 23 Jan 91 First Edition p 5

["Appeal by Military Scientists to the Country's Legislators"—KRASNAYA ZVEZDA headline]

[Text] Plans for creating republic armies have emerged in various regions of our country recently. B.N. Yeltsin's statement at a news conference on 14 January gives particular prominence to this idea. Having spent many years researching military problems, we are very concerned by these projects. They lack scientific justification.

We consider it our civic duty to state the following. The entire experience of world history and that of the fatherland along with the results of numerous scientific surveys provide convincing evidence that the idea of creating parallel armed forces within the framework of a single state is thoroughly unconvincing and extremely dangerous. This conclusion can be applied in full to Soviet military building.

Quantitative evaluations carried out in a number of scientific centers show that the degree of combat readiness of all the republic armed forces together will be several times lower than the combat capability of the existing USSR Armed Forces. There are a number of reasons for such a sharp fall. Let us look at some of them. Owing to the absence of a single system of cover, the scattered republic armies will be unable to deflect a possible air-space enemy attack, which constitutes the basis of a modern strategic operation. Each border republic is only capable of organizing one echelon of defense, which predetermines enemy superiority in a given theatre of military operations.

Analysis shows that on the creation of republic troop formations the republics and the country as a whole will be faced with massive absolute growth in material and financial expenditure. According to available statistics, the cost of maintaining one 1,000-man regiment in the Armenian national formation in 1990 was 35 million rubles [R]. It will cost over R7 billion to deploy one motorized infantry division, taking due account of the need for establishing a repair base, storehouses, accommodation and barracks, and so on. Naturally, creating one's own army means training a national officer corps—the backbone of any armed force. Nowadays, it costs the state a sum in excess of R50,000 to train just one officer at a military-academic institution. On top of this there are the additional appropriations for setting up republic defense ministries (committees) with a corresponding system of staff and administrative organs. The production, acquisition, and sale of arms, military hardware, and property in small consignments for use by republic armed forces will lead to a steep increase in the price of military products and possibly to their being imported from other states.

As far as the Union is concerned, the birth of republic military economies will signify the violation of established economic links between military enterprises, the dismantling of the military industry's central administration organs, disorganization in the conversion processes, territorial and departmental scattering of strategic raw materials, and a significant fall in the production of many consumer goods.

The emergence of republic armies inside the Union will also step up international instability and trigger negative foreign political and foreign economic processes and phenomena. In particular, it is predicted that programs for economic, scientific, and technical cooperation which exist between our country and foreign states and firms will be suspended. New momentum will be given to the arms race and the militarization of the national economy.

Increasingly widespread ideas about the "might" and "cohesion" of the national armed formations which existed during the early years of Soviet power are utterly disproved by impartial scientific analysis and historical fact. Basically, national-territorial units were used for economic tasks and to deal with local gangs. A significant role for the republic armies in strengthening the the Union's defense capability is one of the myths of our country's modern history.

Given the above, we appeal to people's deputies of the USSR, the union republics, and the local soviets—be vigilant and sensible, do not allow a decision to be imposed on you that is fraught with huge dangers for our multinational state.

[Signed] Honored Scientists and Technicians of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic], Professors, and Doctors of Technical Sciences Major Generals of Aviation D.I. Gladkov, G.S. Kondratenkov, and V.M. Sidorin.

A.V. Barabanshchikov, honored scientist of the RSFSR, doctor of pedagogical sciences, professor, and reserve major general.

V.I. Polkov, honored military pilot, twice hero of the Soviet Union, and lieutenant general of aviation; V.Z. Skubilin, hero of socialist labor, candidate of technical sciences, and colonel general of aviation.

Doctors of Historical Sciences and Professors Major General V.P. Bokarev and Colonels Ye.I. Klimchuk, A.Ye. Kuznetsov, V.G. Malikov, V.P. Semin, and F.I. Tatarinov; Senior Lecturer N.Ya. Lysukhin; and A.T. Fesenko, candidate of historical sciences and senior scientific associate.

Doctors of Philosophical Sciences and Professors Colonels B.N. Malkov and Ye.S. Ushanov, Captain 1st Rank V.S. Pusko, and Capt. 1st Rank V.M. Puzik (retired).

Doctors of Economic Sciences and Professors Maj. Gen. V.D. Korolev and Capt. 1st Rank A.I. Pozharov (retired); Candidates of Economic Sciences Senior Lecturer Col. I.V. Abrosimov and Reserve Capt. 1st Rank V.I. Tsema.

Doctors of Psychological Sciences Professors Maj. Gen. S.I. Syedin, Colonels L.F. Zheleznyak and V.G. Krysko, and Colonels N.I. Luganskiy and V.T. Yusov (retired).

Candidates of Military Sciences Senior Lecturers Captains 1st Rank N.K. Monakhov and V.N. Gritauk.

[Editorial postscript] Letters addressed to the USSR and RSFSR Supreme Soviets reflecting deep concern about the intentions to divide the country's armed forces into republic armies have also been received from the families of servicemen at one of the garrisons in the Latvian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] (302 signatures), participants in a meeting of the M.V. Frunze Central House of the Soviet Army military scientific society, participants in a training conference of combined unit commanders and their deputies currently taking place in the Volga-Urals Military District, and many other readers.

Baltic Republics

Prunskiene Reportedly Seeks Asylum in Switzerland

AU2501094891 Paris AFP in English 0946 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Text] London, Jan 25 (AFP)—Former Lithuanian Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene has asked for political asylum in Switzerland and has left Lithuania but reports that her life was in danger were false, Lithuanian sources said here Friday.

Grazvydas Kirvaitis, head of the London-based Lithuanian information center, confirmed that a statement saying Mrs. Prunskiene was leaving the Baltic republic for an indefinite period because of fears for her life had been read on her behalf in the parliament in Vilnius earlier this week.

(In Bern, Swiss Justice Ministry spokesman Jorg Kistler said Switzerland had not received any such request. "If she had, we would have an indication," he added.)

Mrs. Prunskiene was forced to resign earlier this month after supporters of Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis joined with the republic's Russian community to oppose her plans for radical price reforms.

Mr. Kirvaitis said "there are fears" among Lithuanian dissidents abroad over the use of funds in a Stockholm bank account that was set up in Mrs. Prunskiene's name to be used to finance the republic's independence movement.

He stopped short of saying Mrs. Prunskiene might try to use the funds for personal ends but criticized her decision to leave Lithuania and her assertion that her life was in danger, saying the move "played into Moscow's hands."

"Moscow is anxious to portray us as an intolerant, dangerous people and what she did will only strengthen that view," Mr. Kirvaitis said.

Mr. Kirvaitis and other sources confirmed that Mrs. Prunskiene had left Lithuania and said they believed she had travelled to Germany where her daughter is a student.

Prunskiene Departs for Germany

LD2401191991 Moscow TASS in English 1907 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Moscow January 24 TASS—"There is nothing sensational in Prunskiene's departure. She has just flown to Germany," press secretary of the Lithuanian mission in Moscow Lenginas Vasiliauskas told TASS by telephone.

Previously IZVESTIYA reported that "Prunskiene left in an unknown direction."

Soviet 'Armed Column' Fires on Cars in Lithuania

AU2401185091 Paris AFP in English 1842 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Vilnius, Lithuania, Jan 24 (AFP) — A Soviet armed column Thursday [24 January] opened fire on cars on a road between Vilnius and Kaunas, wounding at least one man, Lithuanian Deputy President Cheslovas Stankevicius said here here.

Two cars were damaged in the attack, including a police car, he said.

At least one man was injured and another taken away by the soldiers, he added.

Kaunas is the second city of the Baltic republic.

TASS on Shooting Incident

LD2401215191 Moscow TASS in English 2137 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS Correspondent Serafim Bykhun]

[Text] Vilnius January 25 TASS—Persons driving a Moskvich car fired from a pistol at a column of paratroopers, which headed from Vilnius to the place where they are permanently stationed, TASS was told at the headquarters of the Vilnius Garrison.

Soldiers managed to detain one of the shooters. He was found to possess two identification cards, issued by the security department of the Lithuanian parliament and the Department for the Protection of the Territory, a pass to the police academy, a pistol of the TT model, two reserve chargers to it, an accumulator to a Japanese-made portable radio set and 52 cartridges to the pistol, packed in boxes for photo films.

Criminal proceedings will be launched.

Vilnius Prosecutor on Shooting

LD2501113391 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1045 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Text] The following information is signed by the Vilnius city chief prosecutor, [name indistinct]:

In the evening of 24 January this year, soldiers of the Soviet Army fired from automatic weapons at cars in Savanoriu Prospektas in Vilnius. Twenty-nine shots were fired at one car, people were abducted, a private car was taken away, and the immunity of foreign journalists was crudely violated.

Proceedings have been started in the wake of this crime at the Vilnius city procuracy in accordance with Article 72 of the Lithuanian Criminal Code, that is, for banditry and [words indistinct]. The investigation is clarifying the details of the crime, the number of abducted and injured people. Casualties and [words indistinct] should apply to the city procuracy.

Radio Reports Shots Fired, Patrols in Vilnius

LD2501002691 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 2331 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Esteemed Vilnius residents, the Information Bureau of the Lithuanian Supreme Council states the following:

Military activity is especially lively tonight. New posts have been set up on the streets, patrols are on the move. They are stopping vehicles. People are being stopped and searched on the streets and even in buses. Shots can be heard in some places. Patrols are especially active on the Valakampiai bridge, at [word indistinct] and Gelvonu, Apkasu and Zalgirio intersections, Laisves [word indistinct], Kosmonautu Prospektas, in Baltupiai, and on the Moletos road near Santariskiai.

In these and other places all vehicles are stopped and searched.

We advise Vilnius residents not to walk or ride on the streets if there is no urgent need.

Vilnius Situation Reportedly Normalizing

LD2401122591 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Report by correspondent A. Gerasimov in Vilnius; from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] [Gerasimov] The situation in Lithuania is continuing to return to normal, although it is naturally too early to talk about complete stabilization. The signs of the recent clashes are disappearing from the streets, albeit slowly. There are more smiles on the faces of passers-by. People are getting back to their ordinary way of life. They are working, bringing up their children, and going shopping. Incidentally, the shelves in the shops of Vilnius are more abundantly stocked than in Russia. The prices are at last year's level. Each day the number of pickets outside the building of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet is also decreasing. The field kitchens have disappeared. There are fewer campfires. One cannot see new entries in the artistic row of defensive constructions around the legislature. True, long-term gas-heating devices have appeared. Concern for people! And those few who are continuing to keep watch are today signing peaceful songs.

It is unlikely that the servicemen of the Ministry of Internal Affairs who are standing guard over a number of civilian installations in the city can hear these singers. The television tower, the television and radio complex, the Press House, and some other buildings are being monitored. No one could explain to us why the Press House is under guard. You see, all the newspapers that were formerly published here are nevertheless continuing to come out. They are being printed in other places.

Yesterday Colonel Belousov, the commandant of Vilnius, informed journalists that a number of units that had been here over the past two weeks have been withdrawn from the city. According to him, over the past few days three attacks have been made on checkpoints by unidentified individuals who shot at servicemen with automatic weapons from passing cars. There were no casualties.

According to a report from the Lithuanian agency ELTA, 509 people have been registered at the republic's medical institutions who suffered during the clashes during those alarming days. Forty-five of them have bullet wounds. Today 35 victims are in hospital. The procuracy is continuing its investigation.

In the town soviet of Kaunas, a working group has been formed to maintain contacts with military units deployed on its territory. The military men have also set up a similar group. By joint efforts they have started to seek a way of lessening the tension and avoiding conflicts.

The appeal of the Congress of the Democratic Forces of Lithuania, which has been circulated in Vilnius to the republic's Supreme Soviet, demands a radical change in the policy of the present legislature. The document asserts that the National Salvation Committee expresses the will of the broad masses. True, we have still not managed to find a single person in Lithuania who approves the activity of this committee. The congress has put forward a number of demands to legislature on reorganizing the republic's political life.

Yesterday, First Secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Burokevicius, sent a letter to Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Landsbergis, with a proposal that they should meet to discuss the situation in the republic for the purpose of eliminating the tension and confrontation. According to our information, there is still no reply, but the very fact of the appearance of such a letter indicates the possibility of finding points of contact between the opposing sides.

Today, at a meeting of first secretaries of Lithuanian Communist Party rayon committees, Mykolas Burokevicius reported that, according to his information, Kaziemiera Prunskiene, the republic's former prime minister, has left for the United States. In the note that she left, Prunskiene stated that she left her homeland to seek assistance for Lithuania abroad.

Lithuania's Vagnorius Issues Appeal to Gorbachev

LD2401215491 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The government information service is authorized to announce that the prime minister of the Republic of Lithuania, Gediminas Vagnorius, sent the following telegram today to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov:

Since the 13 January events in Vilnius, a delegation of the Soviet Council of the Federation has been visiting the Republic of Lithuania to clarify the situation, and the authorized representative of the Soviet president, USSR people's Deputy Tazarevich, is at present in Vilnius.

The Soviet Union's representatives have publicly stated more than once that the aim of their visit to Lithuania is to help to establish and maintain contacts between the leadership of the Republic of Lithuania and the representatives of the Soviet armed forces in Lithuania. Although the tense poilitical situation in Lithuania caused by the well-known actions of the armed forces demands that such contacts be established as soon as possible, and although the delegated Soviet representatives have declared their efforts to mediate in this sphere, the contacts—through the fault of the military—are being established with difficulty, negotiations are not taking place, and even more buildings are being occupied. Soviet servicemen are doing what they like in the towns and villages of the Republic of Lithuania.

It was agreed on 24 January that a delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister Zigmas Vaisvila would meet Vilnius Garrison Command Major General Uskhopchik. But Major General Uskhopchik, having compelled the deputy prime minister to wait half an hour at the garrison's control point, refused to see him and sent a message that he did not have any questions to discuss with Lithuania's representatives.

I urgently ask you, respected president of the Soviet Union, and you, respected prime minister of the Soviet Union, to take all the necessary effective measures to ensure that lawless actions of the representatives of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Republic of Lithuania be stopped, that the state property and buildings unlawfully occupied by force are vacated, and that additional Army units are withdrawn from the territory of the Republic of Lithuania.

The Government of the Republic of Lithuania states once again that it is ready to negotiate with the Soviet Union on all issues, but it cannot tolerate violence and lawless actions on the part of the Soviet Armed Forces.

[Signed] Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, Gediminas Vagnorius

Landsbergis Addresses Supreme Council 24 Jan

LD2401115891

[Editorial Report] Kaunas Radio Kaunas in Lithuanian at 0810 GMT on 24 January begins a live relay of the plenary session of the Lithuanian Supreme Council in Vilnius. The session begins with a discussion of the day's agenda.

At 0822 GMT, Supreme Council Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis begins to speak. He says: "I have made several phone calls this morning in an attempt to contact the USSR officials who are here in Lithuania, including Mr. Tarasevich, the plenipotentiary of the president, concerning the events of yesterday and today. These events could be described as the continued license of the Soviet Armed Forces despite the fact that on more than one occasion promises have been made that this would be discontinued, and even despite the Soviet president's condemnation of the summoning of troops to render assistance to local organizations or committees in support of their interests."

Landsbergis goes on to discuss the occupation of the paper warehouse in Kirtimai on 22 January. He says that he was given assurances that this was undertaken purely in order to prevent someone from making claims to the property in question. Landsbergis states: "In fact this was not only a measure to protect the property. The staff members were thrown out, and very harshly at that. People were threatened with guns, and given 10 minutes to collect their private possessions and leave." He says that criminal proceedings have already been issued by the Lithuanian Procurator's Office.

He asserts that deeds have greatly differed from words, and declares: "Even the explanations given to Mr. Demidov, deputy minister, or Mr. Tarasevich do not correspond to reality. Even more painful is the disappearance of student Mindaugas Jozukonis, which took place yesterday. There are signs of violence in the apartment from which he vanished—broken glass, things overturned—therefore it is evident that he was kidnapped and taken away by force. He left a note, written in Russian; obviously he was allowed to write this. The note said: "They are taking me somewhere." Landsbergis goes on to say that the young man is a student and even according to Soviet laws they had no right to kidnap him. He adds that the military commanders in Vilnius have assured the student's parents that they know nothing about the incident. Landsbergis says that this kind of terror is aimed at creating an atmosphere in which "no one can be sure what will happen from day to day."

He states that, although he asked the military commanders more than once to inform the government of the republic about troop movements in this republic, "movements of military columns took place yesterday in the direction of Prienai or Kaunas," and the government was not told about this.

He says that a meeting is being held between the two procurator's offices for the purpose of discussing the issue of cooperation between the USSR and the republican procurators. He says that among the various questions which the procurator's offiche in Moscow should be asked is the question of "who finances and who is feeding the group of terrorists which has until recently been operating in the city of Riga." He said that the Special Purpose Militia Detachment must be subordinated to an institution. Another issue which should be raised at the meeting with the USSR procurators is the provision of lists of names of the members of the so-called Salvation Committee, as well as information on who is financing the committee.

Landsbergis goes on to discuss support in the West. He says that Lithuanian Foreign Minister Saudargas is in Brussels today and is to leave for Oslo, where he will meet other Lithuanian Government officials.

On the issue of who is in power at the moment in the Soviet Union, Landsbergis states: "Minor acts carried out by the subunits of the Soviet troops which had been moved into Lithuania may also indicate that these are provocations against the president of the Soviet Union, because these actions do not correspond to the statements of the president. This might be a way of discrediting him or a way of showing that the military are strong and mighty and the president cannot be in full control over them. Therefore, he cannot be fully responsible for what is taking place. Whatever the case, there must be some kind of answer."

Landsbergis concluded his remarks by saying that yesterday's telegram to Gorbachev was one of the attempts to obtain this answer. "It is not only Lithuania that needs this answer," he says. His 12-minute speech ends at 0834 GMT, and the live relay concludes at 0840 GMT.

Landsbergis Accuses Army of 'Arbitrary Rule'

LD2401171291 Moscow TASS in English 1703 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS correspondent Kazis Uscila]

[Text] Vilnius January 24 TASS—"Despite Mikhail Gorbachev's statements on the inadmissibility of using the Soviet Army to protect the interests of any organisations or committees, Soviet Army units go ahead with arbitrary rule," Lithuanian parliament [chairman] Vytautas Landsbergis told deputies of the Lithuanian parliament. In this regard this morning, he approached presidential envoy Georgiy Tarazevich, now in Lithuania, and asked for clarifications.

Accoding to Landsbergis, military men seized another building and its valuables. They drove employees working there out of the building threatening them with weapons. (On Wednesday, the military occupied a facility for storage of newsprint and paints).

Landsbergis expressed dissatisfaction that despite accords and promises, "the parliament and government do not receive timely information about the movement of Soviet Army units in the republic." He said this lack of information has provoked anxious speculation and created an atmosphere of mistrust and enhanced tension.

Landsbergis Accused of Putting Off 'Peace Moves'

PM2501111791 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 25 Jan 91 First Edition p 1

[Report by unidentified correspondent under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Landsbergis Not Seeking Dialogue"]

[Text] Vilnius, 24 Jan—Yesterday M. Burokevicius, chairman of the Lithuanian Congress of Democratic Forces, appealed to V. Landsbergis, chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet. The appeal reads: "The leadership of the Lithuanian Congress of Democratic Forces proposes that a meeting be held with the leadership of our congress and that the social situation in the republic be discussed with a view to removing the tension and confrontation. These questions should be resolved without delay by political means."

The Congress of Democratic Forces also appealed to the inhabitants of Lithuania and urged them to exercise mutual tolerance and build a democratic, rule-of-law society with equal rights for all citizens.

The National Salvation Committee also issued an appeal to people of goodwill yesterday.

What are the Lithuanian legislators and Supreme Soviet Chairman V. Landsbergis considering doing in response to these appeals? Unfortunately, I have been unable to obtain a first-hand answer to this question. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA's correspondent has again been refused accreditation. And so that I and other newspapermen unacceptable to the Lithuanian Government should not disturb them the following statement appeared in the Supreme Soviet yesterday: "Journalists who have arrived from Latvia, Estonia, and the USSR are requested to contact the Lithuanian Foreign Minsitry...." And at the Foreign Ministry it is the same old refrain.

V. Landsbergis delivered his traditional report on the political situation to the Supreme Soviet session. His speech devoted a lot of space to the West's reaction to events in the Baltic. It was clear that Landsbergis is counting on concrete action being taken there—stopping aid to the Soviet Union and suspending credits. So peace moves can wait, he thinks.

Lithuanian Supreme Council Appeal on 9 Feb Poll

LD2501120391 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Appeal issued by the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania]

[Text] The Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania has adopted a decision on the poll of residents of the Republic of Lithuania on 9 February 1991.

Forces hostile to Lithuania's independence, having taken from us the most important means of radio, television, and the press may hinder by various means the preparations for this poll, incorrectly explain its aims and essence, and prevent people from freely expressing their will.

The deputies of the Supreme Council, of various views, invite all public organizations, parties, and movements to explain in an active manner the essence and aims of the poll, and ask the people of Lithuania to take part in the poll: Are you for an independent democratic Lithuanian state? This means that the right of every person and of national minorities in Lithuania will be guaranteed by the principles of democracy and the norms of international law.

People of Lithuania! Your brothers and sisters have given their lives for Lithuania's independence, and we must come express our view for the future of all of us. The expression of your will is the most important [words indistinct] in consolidating Lithuania's independence.

Poll Not Referendum

PM2301164391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Jan 91 Union Edition p 2

[Report by special correspondents N. Lashkevich and A. Protsenko: "A Poll, Not A Referendum"]

[Text] Vilnius—So while the USSR prepares for a national referendum, Lithuania will merely conduct a poll of the population, who will be asked to approve or reject the basic provision of the projected constitution: "The Lithuanian state is an independent, democratic republic."

As we can see, there is no more mention of any participation in a Union of sovereign states, which is not surprising in view of the recent bloody events. But why are they holding a mere poll and not a referendum on such an important matter? There is a fundamental difference here: A referendum is an expression of the people's will—a juridical act that is binding; the results of a poll are not binding in any way.

In reply to your correspondent's question, V. Landsbergis, chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet, said: "The holding of a referendum requires certain conditions, not an occupying army on the rampage."

The atmosphere in the republic is certainly red-hot. The population simply does not believe any of the military's assurances that they do not intend to use force any more. Moreover, for some reason a curfew is still in force in Vilnius. According to Lithuanian Internal Affairs Minister M. Misiukonis, vehicles entering and leaving the city are being checked at eight different checkpoints without any consultation with the republican authorities, and the city itself is being patrolled by armed detachments, although this is being done as a "formality." It is true that, as a result of the checks, two people have alrady been arrested in possession of weapons.

On the other hand, as Lithuanian Internal Affairs Ministry leaders announced at a news conference, there have been two "misunderstandings," in which the city militia have had to deal with drunken armed officers of the Soviet Army. In one incident a major, armed with a submachine gun, ended up disarming a State Motor Vehicle Inspectorate station. Naturally, journalists, including foreign ones, would very much like to hear the garrison command's explanation. But, it was announced at the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Press Center, the military command has flatly refused to attend news conferences.

A Lithuanian legislative delegation headed by C. Stankevicius, deputy chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet, has left for Moscow to agree on and prepare a draft treaty between Lithuania and the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic.

Gorbachev Talks With Lithuanian Deputies Reviewed

LD2401163191

[Editorial Report] Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 1200 GMT on 24 January carries a three-minute report by correspondent Mikhail Smirnov in Vilnius on rumors circulating there since yesterday's "Vremya" report that a laser beam was directed against the office of Vytautas Landsbergis. Smirnov denies this rumor, calling it a "malicious invention" and explaining that a red lamp on a building on the other side of the river was mistaken for a laser beam. Nevertheless, the rumor has alarmed people in Vilnius. Smirnov asks why this rumor was picked up and reported at a news conference.

Smirnov continues that 20 minutes ago he met with Vytautas Launusas, a USSR Supreme Soviet deputy and dean of the Lithuanian conservatory. He was the initiator of the recent meeting between Lithuanian deputies and Gorbachev. Smirnov asked him how the meeting had gone, and reports:

"This meeting lasted for an hour and 20 minutes. He says it was very amicable. As he put it: I got the feeling that Mikhail Sergeyevich wanted to continually justify himself in some way. But at the end, Launusas asked what message he could convey to Landsbergis. Gorbachev said: Give him my best regards.

"I think that the whole meaning of this conversation lies in the fact that, after this conversation with the Lithuanian delegation, the next day Gorbachev stated that all national salvation committees are unconstitutional. This is the great achievement of this delegation. I think that they made their contribution to this statement as well."

The studio announcer and Smirnov conclude by hoping that this offers some chance of stabilizing the situation in Lithuania.

Lithuania Intelligensia Appeal on Media Seizure

LD2401214691 Kaunas Radio Kaunas in Lithuanian 1710 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Appeal by Lithuanian workers of culture and science issued in Vilnius on 24 January]

[Text] To the Soviet Union's President Gorbachev, the Soviet Union's general procurator, the general director of UNESCO, the general director of the OIR [expansion unknown], the president of the International Association for the Defense of Author's Rights:

A statement: On the night of 12-13 January, Soviet Union Army units attacked the Lithuanian radio and television building and the transmission tower in Vilnius, objects which belong to the Republic of Lithuania.

During the attack 13 unarmed people were killed and about 300 were injured. During the seizing of the radio and television building expensive equipment was destroyed, journalists were brutally driven away, and their personal belongings were stolen.

Lithuanian radio and television suffered losses totalling 42 million rubles.

At present the occupied radio and television installations are used to broadcast cynical and misinforming programs by the anonymous Citizens' Salvation Committee in the name of which the abovementioned predatory action was carried out. The committee uses in is broadcasts seized recordings of the creations of artists of the Republic of Lithuania, films, concerts, and performances produced by Lithuanian television, without the agreement of their authors and in spite of their protests. As well as this the antihumane propaganda of that committee is being broadcast on 846 kHz by a powerful unregistered station of unknown subordination, calling itself Tarybu Lietuva, and interfering with the work of the registered Lithuanian radio station on 666 kHz.

In spite of the fact that the Soviet Union's President Gorbachev acknowledged that such action by the committee were unlawful, the Soviet Union does nothing to correct the state of affairs.

Therefore we, the workers of the republic's culture and science, elected to the Board of Lithuanian radio and television, are asking you to do everything possible so that:

1. The organizers and executioners of the abovementioned massacre are exposed, condemned, and punished.

2. Units of the Soviet Army are withdrawn from the Lithuanian radio and television, the transmission tower, and other occupied civilian objects and these are returned to their lawful owners.

3. Compensation is made for the material damage to Lithuanian radio and television.

[Signed] Lecturer (Raimondas Katinas), chairman of the Board of Lithuanian radio and television and department head at Vilnius University;
Members of the Board of Lithuanian radio and television: The editor of the magazine METAI, writer Juczas Abutis;
The department head at Vilnius Conservatoire, composer Osvaldas Valakauskas;
The rector of St. Kazimieras church in Vilnius, Catholic priest Jonas Boruta;
The deputy chairman of the board of radio and television, journalist Edvinas Butkus;
Doctor of physics and mathematics, Romualdas Brazis;
Producer at the Vilnius Russian Drama Theater, actor Mikhail Vevdokimov;
Radio and television journalist Algimantas Jokubenas;
The director of Lithuanian television Algirdas Kauspedas;
Singer at the Art Theater and producer, Vytautas [name indistinct];
The chairman of the Lithuanian Artists' Union, Bronius Leonavicius;
The deputy chairman of the Lithuanian Composers' Union, musicologist Ona Narbutiene;
Deputy of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, Professor Vytautas Paliunas;
Lecturer at Vilnius University, philosopher Kristencijus Poskus;
The editor of TIESA newspaper, journalists Domijonas Sniukas;
General director of Lithuanian radio and television, Skirmantas Valiulis.
Doctor of philology, Academician Professor Vanda Zaborskaite.

Brazauskas Urges Agreement With Lithuanian Party

LD2401154991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1427 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Report by special correspondent Vladimir Perfilyev in Vilnius]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Algirdas Brazauskas, former first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee, a former deputy to Prunskiene, and now chairman of the Lithuanian Democratic Party of Labor, today [word indistinct] the building of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee. According to unconfirmed reports, he proposed that the efforts of the two parties be amalgamated in the political struggle. So far there are no reports on the details of the meeting with Mykolas Burokevicius, first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee. But there is a report that Mykolas Burokevicius—he is at the same time chairman of the Congress of Democratic Forces of Lithuania, which amalgamates 22 democratic parties supporting restoring the Constitution of the USSR and the constitution of the republic—sent a letter to Vytautas Landsbergis, chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, in which he reports that the leadership of the Congress of Democratic Forces of Lithuania proposes a meeting with the leadership of the Supreme Council to discuss the social situation in the republic with a view to reducing tension and confrontation. These questions should be solved immediately by political means, this letter points out.

And there is one more statement circulated today which should be mentioned. This is a statement of the Socialist Federation of the Working People of Lithuania on a planned opinion poll of the republic's population. It points out that the poll planned for 9 February, instead of a referendum, is contrary to the law, incompatible even with the provincial fundamental law of Lithuania. Especially such a hasty one. It points out that in this maneuver it is not difficult to discern an attempt to get from the people the answers it requires to questions which it itself has so far been unable to sort out. The Socialist Federation of the Working People of Lithuania has condemned the political maneuver adopted by the Supreme Council in relation to the people of Lithuania, and has stated that it will turn to the president of the USSR with a proposal to deem the decision of the republican Supreme Council on a poll of the population of Lithuania unlawful and not subject to execution. That is the news today.

Paper Views Contrasting Developments in Vilnius

PM2401164391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 25 Jan 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report by special correspondents N. Lashkevich and A. Protsenko: "Troops Leaving Vilnius?"]

[Text] Vilnius—The day after the USSR president's statement deeming impermissible appeals to the Army to resolve political disputes, the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee has yet again retrieved party property, placing its stocks of paper and printer's ink under military guard.

At a news conference at the Lithuanian legislature Soviet and foreign journalists were told that N. Gribanov, Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee administrator of affairs, had cited the USSR Council of Ministers resolution on the protection of party property signed by N. Ryzhkov 28 March 1990.

However, there has also been gratifying information. Colonel G. Belous, military commander of the Vilnius Garrison, reported that the "special situation" status was over for the Army and that the garrison had resumed normal duties. Certain units which had earlier been sent into Vilnius have left the garrison. "I think they have returned to their permanent base," Belous added.

Admittedly, this is not enough for V. Landsbergis. He told journalists that he had sent a telegram to USSR President M. Gorbachev. This telegram, along with a positive assessment of the statement, contains a proposal that troops should be ordered to leave the installations captured earlier, including the television and radio committee and the television tower.

We can only add that, according to the information on hand, all these installations are currently being guarded by USSR MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] Internal Troops rather than by the Soviet Army.

A conciliatory step has also been taken by the other side. On behalf of the Congress of Democratic Forces (and it is alleged that it was this congress which set up the underground Lithuanian National Salvation Committee) M. Burokevicius, first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee, has sent V. Landsbergis, chairman of the republic's Supreme Soviet, a brief letter proposing that they meet to discuss the sociopolitical situation in Lithuania "in order to remove the tension and confrontation." Admittedly, at the time when this letter was being prepared at the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee servicemen were placing the paper store on the outskirts of Vilnius under guard.

In general the establishment of contacts is proceeding with difficulty. Proof of that is provided by the failure so far to reach agreement on a joint investigation into the events of 11-13 January by the USSR Prosecutor's Office and the Lithuanian prosecutor general. In our previous piece we reported that such an agreement was in preparation. This was based on a conversation with Lithuanian Prosecutor General A. Paulauskas, who was sure that an agreement would be reached in the next few hours. Unfortunately, two days later an agreement on joint work has still not been concluded. Both prosecutor's offices are refusing to make any comment on the reasons for their differences.

Lithuanian Food Supply Situation Assessed

LD2301140791 Vilnius International Service in English 2230 GMT 22 Jan 91

[Interview with Patrus Sarickas, deputy director of the food processing department in Lithuania by an unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—recorded; Sarickas speaks in Lithuanian with superimposed English translation]

[Text] [Announcer] The residents of Vilnius have noticed that is is more easy now to buy something in a food shop, like say meat or poultry. So, will Lithuania experience food shortages? Here is Patrus Sarickas, deputy director of the food processing department.

[Sarickas] There are several reasons for this. First of all, Lithuania has reduced meat sales to Moscow and nothing at all is sent to Leningrad. We were forced to do so because Moscow has reduced the sales of agreed amounts of grain to Lithuania. Therefore, we have large resources of meat for the Lithuanian market in spite of the fact that at present less cattle is being provided for the slaughterhouses.

As far as I know, the former Lithuanian Government has signed a trade agreement with the Soviet Government. The agreement provides for 1.3 million tonnes of grain to be sold to Lithuania. This amount is nearly the same quantity as last year. Accordingly, Lithuania, for its part, has to sell large amounts of milk and meat to the Soviet Union. We are now very careful to coordinate the quantities of the meat sales to the quantities of the grain received.

[Announcer] Radio Vilnius correspondent asked Patrus Sarickas about bread for everyday use.

[Sarickas] The situation has stabilized now and once again we are working in the same (?rhythym) as earlier. The city of Vilnius used to sell 130 to 140 tonnes of bread every day. We now have enough of rye flour and Lithuanians are rye bread-loving people. Meanwhile, we don't grow some specific types of wheat here in Lithuania. We buy them in Russia. Agreements have already been reached and this problem is considered to be resolved. At present there are no problems with providing the bread bakeries with flour.

The problem of sugar is very acute in Lithuania though. Seventy-five thousand tonnes of sugar are processed from sugar beet grown by the Lithuanian farmers. Meanwhile, 180,000 tonnes are consumed in Lithuania that were earlier processed from unrefined sugar received from Cuba via the USSR. We bought it from the Soviet Union and we are afraid that we would not get it any longer. However, now it has become clear that the Soviet Union is ready to sell 112,000 tonnes of Cuban unrefined sugar to Lithuania. But on the whole the problem of sugar remains acute and we have decided at the Ministry of Agriculture to produce the sugar Lithuania needs from sugar beet, the way all European countries do. We have already invited foreign specialists and have ourselves visited Denmark, Germany, and Sweden. We should be able to fully provide ourselves with sugar.

Cooking oil is also a great problem here in Lithuania. It is an essential ingredient for food processing industry and ranks second on the list of most important foodstuffs, the first being sugar. Up till now, Lithuania purchased cooking oil from the Ukraine and Russia. We have already worked out a program for processing vegetable oil in Lithuania from local raw materials. The problem, however, will be solved for three years only.

[Announcer] Patrus Sarickas, deputy director of the food processing department, has assured Radio Vilnius that Lithuania will have enough of sugar, cooking oil, and cereal, in case the agreements made are not kept by the other side.

PRAVDA Views Gorbunovs' Talks With Gorbachev

PM2401155591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 91 Second Edition p 1

[TASS report: "Head of Latvian Legislature on His Meeting With USSR President"]

[Text] Riga, 23 Jan—In order to end the "laws war" spoken of in yesterday's statement by the USSR president, it is necessary to change the laws themselves—this is the viewpoint of A.V. Gorbunovs, chairman of the Latvian Supreme Soviet. Today he addressed the republic's legislature, where he briefed deputies on his talks with M.S. Gorbachev.

Expounding on the course of the meeting, the head of the Latvian legislature reported on the discussion of the ability of Latvia itself to emerge from the crisis. According to Gorbunovs, he assured the president that the possibilities of a democratic solution to problems are still far from exhausted. The chairman of the Latvian Supreme Soviet is ready to initiate a dialogue among various political forces, but only those, he emphasized, that recognize the legitimately elected government and legislature and do not seek power by unconstitutional means. Gorbunovs does not rule out an expert assessment of a number of the laws already adopted by the republic in order that, if there are proposals to change certain articles in them, the Supreme Soviet could discuss this. He also allows the possibility of holding referenda, for he is convinced that an independent democratic state can only be built by all the inhabitants of Latvia together, expressing their attitude toward particular processes in society. But the holding of referenda, he pointed out, is within the competence of the Latvian Supreme Soviet. During the talks—according to Gorbunovs—he told the president that a return to the USSR Constitution is impossible both for Latvia and for the other republics.

The leader of the Latvian Supreme Soviet noted the similarity of positions with the president on a number of problems. Views coincided on the need for cooperation among the various political forces in Latvia. Both interlocutors were agreed that the cause of the confrontation in the republic is not an ethnic one but one with political aspects. Gorbunovs said that the country's president dissociated himself from the various public salvation committees.

Latvia's Rubiks Says Situation 'Deteriorated'

LD2401180491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Zaytsev]

[Text] Riga, January 24 (TASS)—Alfred Rubiks, first secretary of the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee, believes that the situation in the republic has sharply deteriorated because of the policy conducted by the Latvian Supreme Soviet majority. He said this at a news conference held today in Riga for Soviet and foreign journalists. The news conference was devoted to the results of the meeting of Alfred Rubiks and Anatoliy Gorbunovs with USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev.

It was stressed that the leaders of the legislature and the Communist Party hold diametrically opposed views on the causes of the existing tension. In the opinion of the leader of the Latvian Communist Party, the majority of the deputies in the legislature are trying to fulfill the will of the People's Front and to adopt laws impeding human rights while ignoring the view of the opposition and putting a halt to any dissent. Alfred Rubiks said that in his speech to the deputies yesterday, Anatoliy Gorbunovs offered a one-sided and incomplete description of the contents of their conversation with the USSR president.

Alfred Rubiks said that what serves as a destabilizing factor is that the republic's current Supreme Soviet, having substantially limited the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic's Constitution, has also declared the USSR Constitution invalid. This is despite the fact, Rubiks said, that all those taking part in the meeting, including Gorbunovs, "have acknowledged that this territory is that of Soviet Latvia."

In reply to a question on whether the republic can extricate itself from the existing situation, the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee first secretary said that the current processes have become so extreme that the present Supreme Soviet will not be able to cope by itself. "What is needed," he said, "is the aid of the Union's bodies to ensure that before a decision is taken on the results of the referendum, the laws and the USSR Constitution are implemented. What is involved here is not the Army but the bodies such as the Procuracy, court and state arbitration; that is, the bodies which can help to establish law and order."

Suspension of the declaration of the reinstatement of Latvian state independence should be a condition for negotiations to be held by the republic and the center. This was also discussed at the meeting in Moscow, where it was stressed that such negotiations can be held with Latvia in its capacity as a Soviet republic but not as a foreign state.

Alfred Rubiks particularly drew the attention of journalists to the fact that all the participants in the conversation with the USSR president reached the same conclusion, that there is a need to set up a committee or a commission for public concord to normalize the situation. The country's president would endorse the membership of the committee, and his plenipotentiary representative would be appointed [as received]. "Since the Supreme Soviet of Latvia does not feel it can itself abolish all its anti-constitutional decisions," Rubiks said, "it is essential for this commission to make the effort to bring the whole of Latvian legislation into line with the USSR constitution and laws."

Having approved the statement by the USSR president, the leader of the Latvian Communist Party stressed that all constructive forces, without exception, must pool their efforts to overcome the existing crisis in Latvia.

Latvia's Jurkans Meets With UK's Hurd, Major

LD2401135991 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 1319 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By diplomatic correspondent Tom McMullan]

[Text] President Mikhail Gorbachev is now "a decoy" intended to attract Western aid to the Soviet Union, Latvia's Foreign Minister Janis Jurkans said in London today. Mr. Jurkans, on the last day of an official visit to London, suggested that Mr. Gorbachev was now under the influence of the Soviet military. "It looks as though he is on their side. They use him as a decoy. They realise that without him as a symbol for the West they will get nothing," he said.

He told a news conference he was gloomy about the outlook for the Baltic states—Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia—and feared dictatorship. But he was "well satisfied" with the British approach after talks with Prime Minister John Major and Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd. "Mr. Major gave political and moral support not just to me personally but to the Baltic states," he said. He hoped to discuss how the issue could be "internationalised" in talks at the Foreign Office later today and that the West would not be distracted by the Gulf war.

So far 20 people had died in the Baltic states—more than had died on the allied side in the Gulf war so far. Soviet elite Black Beret troops shot four people in Riga, the Latvian capital, in disturbances at the weekend. The previous week 14 people were shot in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania.

The three Baltic states, which were taken over by the Soviet Union in 1940 in a pact between Stalin and Hitler, are now seeking their independence. They had never voted to join the Soviet Union, said Mr. Jurkans. He said Latvia was not seeking recognition for a government in exile. "It would be difficult to ask for recognition for a people still travelling on Soviet passports. But if the worst comes to the worst we will be asking people here to work and lobby for the Baltic cause," he said. He added the worst would be "dictatorship or presidential rule which are the same".

Mr. Jurkans rejected a proposal that a referendum should be held in Latvia as a way out of the problem. He said: "You cannot have a referendum at gunpoint."

Asked how long Gorbachev could survive, he said: "I wish I knew. If he is supported by the militarists and obeys what they say he might survive. But what will be the reaction of the West? I cannot see how he can solve the Soviet economic problems without Western help."

Leaving Downing Street, Mr. Jurkans said: "This crisis is not a crisis of the Baltic states, only. This is a military attack on the democratic process of the Soviet Union which should be of great concern not only to the Soviet Union but to Europe and the whole world.

"I understand that the British Government has a very good understanding of the situation and is going to send a very clear message to Moscow that the British Government will never tolerate use of force against democracy in the Baltic states and the Soviet Union.

"I think this message from the West is the most crucial thing in the present day in the present conditions."

Mr. Hurd [foreign secretary] said he was very glad to have had the talks. "There were useful decisions yesterday in Europe in the Political Committee about the postponement of a meeting with the Soviet authorities on the implementation, the carrying through of the technical programme which has been agreed in principle," he said. "These are intended as signals in the direction which Mr. Jurkans has been talking about. "We will maintain our interest, our sympathy and our anxiety about these matters in the hope that President Gorbachev and the policy of the Soviet Union will return to that emphasis on reform and negotiations, particularly with the Baltic republics which we think is the key to the situation."

During the 30-minute talks, Mr. Jurkans briefed the prime minister on the situation in Latvia and the other Baltic republics. He expressed his gratitude for the measures taken by the United Kingdom and other Western countries to bring home to Moscow that it should not use force against the Baltic republics.

The prime minister made clear that Britain's support for the Soviet Union was backing for the reform process and not for repression. Mr. Major said Britain would continue to be activated by that principle. He repeated the position that Britain had never accepted as legal the annexation of the Baltic states but believed a solution could be achieved only through the process of negotiation.

Jurkans Interviewed on BBC TV

PM2401103691

[Editorial Report] London BBC Television Network in English at 2230 GMT on 22 January carries a live interview during the "Newsnight" program with Latvian Foreign Minister Janis Jurkans and Professor Richard Pipes, moderated by reporter Jeremy Paxman, on the Baltic state's rejection of Soviet rule.

Jeremy Paxman introduces the interview: "Mr. Jurkans, if I can start with you. Mr. Gorbachev says—and you can hardly quibble with the logic of this—that the root cause of the problem is that people in the Baltic states are refusing to accept Soviet rule."

Jurkans replies: "Well, I think that the root cause of the problem is that the Baltic people want to restore the independence they lost during World War II; and those who enjoyed power during these 50 years, don't want to lose it. So that's a problem."

In reply to a question about one-third of the population being opposed to an independent Lativa, Jurkans replies: "Well, you know, in Latvia we have 47.5 percent indigenous population and the rest non-Latvians. During three successive elections, in 1990, the supporters of independence got two-thirds majority. It shows that even half of non-Latvian population doesn't mind living in an independent, democratic state."

Paxman asks: "When we see demonstrations by ethnic Russians calling for the continuation of rule from Moscow, what is that? They're unrepresentative of the majority?"

Jurkans answers: "Seven-hundred people you saw on the banks of river; those people who are for independence, who are supporting the government, which is on a transitional way towards that independence."

Paxman inquires: "Now, when we look at the sort of appeal that you and our colleagues are making now to the West, what sort of leverage does the West have?"

Jurkans comments: "Well, I think it has very definite leverage. For today, Moscow is so dependent on Western help, that today sending very clear-cut message to Gorbachev that military intervention in the Baltic states would not be tolerated could help very much, not only the Baltics, but Gorbachev himself. And I think the message has been sent, and it's working."

Paxman asks: "Since when?" Jurkans responds: "Well, I know that today he was about to introduce presidential rule in Latvia. So now he has rejected that idea, now he.... [changes thought] There is a cease-fire today, so I think he got the message, and having that message he could go to the militarists and say: Well, look here; they are cutting aid. We cannot do, we cannot survive without aid. So I think by helping Baltics today, the West is helping Gorbachev, is helping helping democracy."

Paxman asks: "There are people—I won't say in your country—ethnic Russians, who say that what's happening, in your country and in Lithuania and Estonia, is proof that the process of perestroyka is actually dead, and they simply don't believe Mr. Gorbachev when he says that he didn't know about various of these military interventions. What's your view?

Jurkans states: "Well, you have to watch the demonstration in Moscow last Sunday. Three hundred thousand people demonstrated against military attack on the Baltic people, whose slogans calling Gorbachev to resign. And I think it's a clear indication that people see that Gorbachev has reached the situation when he is abandoning democracy and he is joining militarist KGB party. So those old structures...." [shakes head]

Paxman concludes: "Who sees that a lot of these interventions weren't ordered by him, and indeed the interior minister, Boris Pugo, says he also didn't order these interventions."

In response to a comment made by Professor Pipes, that it is inevitable that all the republics will be free, Paxman asks Jurkans: "What sort of time frame are you thinking about, Mr. Jurkans?" Jurkans responds: "Well, I think we have to have it this year, for in our economic, political, moral crisis are indescribable. Situation economically is very, very serious now, and if we do not solve the problem on the political arena; on the international scale if the West doesn't come, doesn't help, so, that would be the end of our dream, of our aspirations. So I think today, by this support we are receiving today, we'll have it this year.

Black Berets Resist Disbandment of Latvian Base

AU2401150791 Paris AFP in English 1405 GMT 24 Jan 91

[by Anne Penketh]

[Text] Riga, Latvia, Jan 24 (AFP)—A crack Soviet police unit accused of killing five people, fuelling nationalist tension, is to appeal to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to prevent closure of its Latvian base, a local deputy chief of the shadowy "Black Berets" said here Thursday.

Sitting in a low green hut at the entrance to the base, some 10 kilometres (six miles) outside the Latvian capital, Captain Slava Lashket told a group of Western reporters he would resist pressure for his unit to be disbanded.

"We will ask Gorbachev to intervene bacause we don't want this unit to be dissolved. And that will be our categorical reply to the Soviet Interior Minister" Boris Pugo, who controls the unit, he said.

"And I think that through Gorbachev our problem will be resolved," he added.

In London on Thursday Latvian Foreign Minister Yanis Yurkans charged that Mr. Gorbachev was being manipulated by the Soviet army.

"It looks as though he is on their side. They use him as decoy," he told a press conference after meetings with British Premier John Major and Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd.

"They realise that without him as a symbol for the West, they will get nothing," he said.

Latvian first Deputy Premier Ilmars Bisers said Tuesday, after talks in Moscow with Mr. Pugo, that the Soviet minister had agreed to confine the unit to its base after Sunday's shooting at the interior ministry here.

But he and Latvian Interior Minister Aloizs Vaznis failed to win "final approval" from Mr. Pugo for the unit be disbanded.

"So far we've not been told to go," said Capt. Lashket, a balding 46-year old with a squint, dressed in army fatigues.

He said that his 200-strong unit took its orders directly from Mr. Pugo and from its divisional command in Vilnius, the capital of neighbouring Lithuania where ethnic tensions are also high.

He firmly denied suggestions that the black berets took orders from either the Latvian or Soviet Communist Party, although the unit had retained a Communist Party cell of 20 people.

Requests to protect buildings in Riga, such as the party printing works and the prosecutor's office, have come from Mr. Pugo.

Relations with the Soviet minister were "very good", he said, compared to those with his pro-reform predecessor Vadim Bakatin with whom there were differences on "some things.

Capt. Lashket said the black beret unit was set up two years ago at Vetsmilgravets, near the Baltic coast, in response to mounting crime. This is the only black beret base in Latvia.

It began operating before the March 1989 general elections which saw a surge of pro-reform and non-Communist Party deputies elected from the republic to the central parliament.

About half the unit is made up of ethnic Russians, while the rest include Latvians, Ukrainians and Georgians. The members, most of whom were previously police detectives, were paid 300 rubles a month, plus a "coffin bonus" of 30 rubles for running risks, Capt. Lashket said.

Until last Sunday's incident, relations with local people had been good, he said, particularly following the unit's success in cracking down on "an American mafia" in the coastal resort of Jurmalas where hold-ups were committed in restaurants. The group was also involved in rescue work and helping local police track down dangerous criminals.

But since Sunday's shooting, the base had been fortified in reaction to threats against unit members. Two armed guards, wearing bullet proof jackets, stood at the barbed wire entrance to the camp, in front of an armoured vehicle.

Unit member Lieutenant Alexander Kuzmin told the reporters in Capt. Lashket's rooom, where an axe lay on a box and a guitar hung on a rack under a black beret, that he had sent his family out of the republic like many other colleagues in the last few days.

"Civil war is already happening," said the lieutenant pointing to ethnic conflict in other Soviet republics. Since being confined to the base, in addition to training, he spent his time reading, watching television or chatting about "everything that is happening in our republic, in the world, in the Gulf."

Concerning Sunday's shooting, Capt. Lashket maintained that his unit had come under fire from a white Volga car while changing the guard at the Soviet prosecutor's office which they had been asked to protect. The office is located near the interior ministry.

He denied that the black berets fired first and said they only shot into the air.

Capt. Lashket claimed "a secret order" from the Latvian interior minister instructing police to open fire if black berets were seen near the interior ministry building showed the incident was a "provocation planned in advance".

Latvian prize winning film director Juris Podnieks said Wednesday that he saw his cameraman Andris Lapins die after being shot in the back in the incident in which the black berets are accused of storming the ministry.

Despite the shooting and the order to stay at the base, morale at the camp continued to be good, Capt. Lashket said.

Latvians Discuss Implementation of Ruble Exchange

LD2401093391 Riga Domestic Service in English 0541 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The Latvian Council of Ministers, in an extraordinary meeting this morning, has worked out guidelines to the banks on the territory of Latvia on the implementation of the Soviet president's decree on the confiscation of 100 ruble [R] and R50 banknotes from circulation within the coming three days. These banknotes are going to be exchanged to the bills of smaller value within the limits of average salary and after R1,000 supplemented by the income declaration. Having still unified monetary system with the USSR, Latvian Government sees no possibilities to stop this decree. Today thousands of people started queuing up at the doors of the saving banks in order to exchange money to the smaller value banknotes. It all was in vain, as the banking system was not ready to start this operation and many saving banks were closed.

Council Condemns Ruble Decree

LD2501072791 Riga Domestic Service in Russian 0433 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Excerpt] The decree of the USSR president on the cessation of the validity of 50-ruble and 100-ruble banknotes and the normative acts elaborated afterward do not correspond to juridical norms. This is how the presidential decree was assessed at yesterday's sitting by the Presidium of the Latvian Republic's Supreme Council. This procedure is degrading for people, as everyone is suspected of having illegal income. Moreover, the hastily convened commissions are granted the right to subjectively decide on the legality or illegality of incomes. Thus, common human norms are blatantly flouted.

During the evening, a sitting of the governmental committee set up for the coordination of the exchange campaign was held. It was noted that there are no small denominations in the banks, so money will not be issued immediately,. It is recommended that these large banknotes be handed in in exchange for a receipt, in order to obtain the exchanged money later. [passage omitted]

Swedish Official on Solidarity With Baltic People

LD2401132791 Stockholm Domestic Service in Swedish 1130 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Pierre Schori, under secretary of state for foreign affairs, arrived in Riga, Latvia today. The purpose of the trip is to show our solidarity, Pierre Schori told our correspondent Savic.

[Begin recording] [Schori] We want to conduct talks about solidarity and cooperation. It is the wish of the government that, through our active presence in the Baltic, we show our solidarity with the Baltic people's striving for independence.

[Savic] How do you judge the situation here now after having had a discussion with Latvian President Gorbunovs?

[Schori] Well, he says that they are fairly optimistic.

[Savic] Did Gorbunovs ask Sweden for anything?

[Schori] Yes, we discussed cooperation and I shall report on that to the government at home.

[Savic] Pierre Schori does not want to disclose what the Latvian President asked for, apart from saying that they are very concrete ideas. The under secretary of state for foreign affairs was also able to tell his hosts today that Swedish Foreign Minister Sten Andersson will next month take up the question of the Baltic peoples' human rights at an international level in Geneva. One of the foremost purposes of this trip to Latvia is to show the Baltic peoples that the question has not been set aside because of what is happening in the Persian Gulf, Schori added.

How, then, will Sweden's relations with the Soviet Union be affected by Swedish support for the Baltic?

[Schori] Well, they ought not to be affected in any other way but positively. We think that economic progress and democracy in the Baltic republics will also benefit the Soviet Union as a whole. [end recording]

Pierre Schori, under secretary of state for foreign affairs, was interviewed by our correspondent Vladislav Savic.

Funds Allocated for Baltics

LD2401064391 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 0445 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Swedish Deputy Foreign Minister Schori is expected to arrive in Riga today. He stated in Stockholm yesterday that the Swedish Government will, as before, support the idea of the independence of the three Baltic states, and has allocated $180,000 to maintain an information bureau of the Baltic countries. A portion of this sum will be used for the organization of Swedish radio programs in Lithuanian.

Latvia Council Rejects Committee View of Treaty

LD2501102991 Riga International Service in Latvian 2030 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The Citizens of Latvia Committee has proclaimed the treaty between the Republic of Latvia and the Russian Federation on interstate relations to be null and void. The committee regards as unacceptable the article in the treaty that grants the rights of a citizen of the Republic of Latvia not only to all those who entered Latvia after 1940, but also to those inhabitants of Russia who express the wish to move to Latvia. This would not solve the citizenship question in Latvia, the leader of the Committee of Latvia, Aivars Jirgens, emphasized. In his opinion, the signing of such an interstate treaty cannot be substantiated by the strained political situation in the Baltics. Implementation of such a treaty would lead to even more serious consequences and conflicts after 20 to 30 years. The Citizens' Movement is ready to continue dialogue with the Supreme Council in order to prevent the adoption of this and other resolutions offending against the interests of citizens.

According to what the Supreme Council chairman, Anatolijs Gorbunovs, has said, it could be judged that he is recommending agreement with the demand of Soviet President Gorbachev to hold also in Latvia a referendum on joining the new Union treaty, the leader of the Committee of Latvia emphasized.

Replying to the action by the Committee of Latvia, in proclaiming the treaty between the Republic of Latvia and the Russian Federation on interstate relations as null and void, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia has rejected these objections as destructive and unsubstantiated in their essence. In the interstate treaty the resoluteness of both sides to guarantee to persons living on their territories the right to preserve or obtain the citizenship of their places of abode in conformity with international human rights has been emphasized. It is important that the Russian Federation recognized the Republic of Latvia as a sovereign state and a subject of international law. This is emphasized in the statement of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia. This is a considerable step in the de facto restoration of the state power of the Republic of Latvia.

Under such circumstances, the action of the leadership of the Committee of Latvia harms the cooperation between the Republic of Latvia and neighboring states in the restoration of its statehood. In supporting the declared basic principles of the activity of the Republic of Latvia Citizens' Movement, the Supreme Council states at the same time that it does not recognize the rights usurped by the leadership of the Committee of Latvia to revise the resolutions adopted by the highest organ of power in the Republic of Latvia. The Supreme Council regards such an action as contradicting the joint statement by the Committee of Latvia and the Supreme Council adopted on 13 January. By such a decision, the leadership of the Committee of Latvia has officially refused cooperation and coordination of standpoints with the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, the legislature's statement says.

Riga Reportedly 'Returning to Normal'

LD2401235491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2153 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Report by S. Antsupov; from the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] The situation in Riga is gradually returning to normal. The transport vehicles are leaving the places that have been under blockade, including the approach roads to the Supreme Soviet and Council of Ministers, the television and radio buildings, and communication centers. The sites are still being guarded, however, since there are, as yet, no sufficient guarantees against the use of force. Everyone remembers that on the morning of the day on which the bloodshed occurred in Lithuania, is was being claimed at the Council of the Federation that military force would not be used. The people of Riga still hope that all the promises which the USSR minister of internal affairs, Boris Pugo, gave to the Latvian minister of internal affairs—and made with his own lips in the Supreme Soviet—will be fulfilled; namely, that the special purpose militia unit will remain at its base and will take no further part in guarding any of the facilities, that the detachment will later be disbanded or withdraw from the republic, and that the arms seized at the Riga branch of the Minsk Militia School, including grenade throwers and machineguns, will be returned.

A special investigation group has been set up, composed of representatives of the procurator's officers of the Latvian Republic and USSR.

The Inhabitants of Latvia now face another problem associated with the withdrawal from circulation of 50 and 100 ruble banknotes. Because of the lack of instructions or imperfect instructions, the poor, against whom this measure does not seem to have been directed, are suffering.

Latvian Lawyer Holds Briefing on 20 Jan Arrests

LD2401221591

[Editorial Report] Riga Domestic Service in Latvian at 1600 GMT on 24 January carries a two-minute report on a news conference held today at the Latvian Supreme Council, at which attorney Vilhelms Kozlovskis told republic and foreign journalists about the facts at his disposal "on the detention of five members of a volunteer unit, Aigars Teteris, Agris Kreismanis, Kaspars Grinbergs, Gatis Jurkans, and Haralds Steinbergs, at around 0400 on 20 January." These five were on patrol in the Vansu bridge area, when OMON [special purpose militia unit] personnel dragged them out of a motor vehicle and brutally beat them up. Now they all are in the KGB prison and the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic Procuracy, specifically Deputy Procurator Petrov, yesterday authorized their arrest. Attorney Kozlovskis has undertaken to defend them, therefore he has had an opportunity of meeting them several times.

According to the report: "Attorney Kozlovskis emphasized that he is still not really clear about the actual reasons for the detention of these persons, or why, at the moment of their detention, fire-arms, cold steel, and ammunition were found on them. Participants in the news conference were informed that neither the accused nor their defense counsel, attorney Kozlovskis, have yet been shown the forensic medical expert examination's report on the evident bodily harm caused by the black beret knights."

The report said that foreign journalists asked for an explanation on the widespread report that the attack by the OMON-men on the Interior Ministry had been caused by the rape of the wife of an OMON commander. "To this the chairman of the Supreme Council's legislative commission, Talavs Jundzis, explained that as late as yesterday the Procuracy of the Republic of Latvia had not yet received any submission on such a crime. Mr. Jundzis further emphasized that taking into consideration certain links with the attack committed on 20 January on the republic's Interior Ministry, all the materials obtained will be summed up and examined as a whole."

Baltic Republics Mourn Riga Deaths of 20 Jan

LD2501114191 Moscow TASS in English 1109 GMT 25 Jan 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Zaytsev]

[Text] Riga January 25 TASS—Black-edged state flags are hanging throughout Latvia today in mourning for those who died on January 20 near the republican Interior Ministry building.

There were four victims—Andris Slapins, a film director and cameraman, Militia Senior Lieutenant Vladimir Gomonovich, Militia Lieutenant Sergey Kononenko, and Eddi Riekstins, a student.

There are many variations about how they died. An inquiry is being conducted by representatives of union and republican law enforcement agencies. The republican Council of Ministers resolved to pay compensation to the families of those killed.

In view of today's funeral, a day of mourning has also been declared in the neighbouring Baltic republics of Lithuania and Estonia.

Estonia's Ruutel Cited on Talks With Gorbachev

PM2401152391 Stockholm DAGENS NYHETER in Swedish 23 Jan 91 p 12

[Report by Mert Kubu: "Threat to Baltics Worrying"]

[Excerpt] Tallinn—"It is unacceptable and worrying that threats and shows of military force are being used against the representatives of the Baltic peoples in their own legislatures," Swedish Riksdag second deputy speaker Christer Eirefelt (Liberal People's Party) told the Estonian legislature.

Eirefelt is a member of the Swedish legislative delegation which arrived in Tallinn yesterday. He promised that Sweden will try to raise the situation in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania at the UN Commission on Human Rights and will take forceful action at future CSCE meetings.

"We look forward to the day when Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania regain their freedom and independence," Eirefelt said.

The Swedish delegation is in Estonia to acquaint itself with the situation and will return to Stockholm this afternoon.

"No military force will be used in Estonia." That was the promise given to Estonian President Ruutel by President Gorbachev. And Ruutel can phone Gorbachev at any time of the day or night to call for help.

Gorbachev promised that "as president he will use his power to halt all use of force," Ruutel reported to the Estonian legislature in Tallinn yesterday.

Will the Estonians really dare to rely on Gorbachev's promise?

"I am trying to interpret it in a positive way. We reached agreement on high-level talks within the next few days. But I have to say that I am still a little apprehensive," Ruutel said.

Ruutel took with him to Moscow a draft protocol on Estonia's political status on the road to independence. The protocol demanded among other things Estonia's right to take part in international organizations in the future.

According to Ruutel, Gorbachev replied, "I do not have the authority to sign the protocol."

However, Gorbachev did accept the draft and the two sides agreed on continued talks.

"When I get home can I tell the Estonian people on television that they can now sleep easy at night?" Ruutel asked Gorbachev.

According to Ruutel's report to the Estonian legislature, Gorbachev then promised that "there will be no resort to military force, no new forces will be transported to Estonia, and no paratroops will be used."

But it was clear that, despite all the promises and the promise of a hot line to Gorbachev, Ruutel did not feel completely convinced. Estonian legislators also had great doubts on this score.

Ruutel said that he had protested forcefully against the military's use of force in Vilnius and Riga. He also confirmed that Gorbachev had described the fatal shootings as more or less "internal conflicts between different militia groups."

Other issues of conflict touched on in the talks were the fate of the 9,000 Estonian boys who are refusing to do military service in the Soviet Army, and the March referendum proposed by Gorbachev.

One of the many questions put to Ruutel was: At the meeting was there any discussion of whether Gorbachev is thinking about demanding the introduction of "presidential rule" in Estonia?

"No," was the reply. [passage omitted]

Estonia's Savisaar Meets Prime Minister Pavlov

LD2501000191 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1500 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Estonian Government leader Edgar Savisaar met USSR Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov today in Moscow. As a result of a two-hour-long meeting, an agreement was reached that Estonian pensioners can exchange money without any restrictions, with immediate receipt of the 200 rubles they have been promised, and the rest to follow within a month. Several other economic issues, relations with the Army, and issues of the alternative service were also discussed.

Estonian Minister Cited on Monetary Reform

PM2401151991 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 91 p 1

[Interview with Jaak Leimann, Estonian minister of economic affairs, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[Text] "At present the Estonian Government does not control the money system in the republic—all power in this matter belongs to Union organs. Therefore in purely objective terms we cannot be against the new action by the president and the prime minister. However, there is a hope that the USSR leadership will be understanding toward our 'wishes,' which the republic government is conveying to Moscow.

"We do not like the exchange 'ceiling' for pensioners.

"Likewise we are asking for a more sensitive attitude to large families and students."

Strike, Money Exchange Cause Problems in Estonia

LD2401205991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Report by special correspondent Andrey Trapeznikov from Tallinn]

[Text] There are two main problems in Estonia today: the exchange of banknotes and the strike. The main attention of the regular session of the legislature was focussed on the first issue. The discussion revealed that the deputies had a lot of queries before the beginning of the session. What can one say of the ordinary citizens?

The legislature has adopted a decision to set up a special republican commission to coordinate the work. Meanwhile Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar is in Moscow for talks with the Union government. The aim is try to get permission to increase the sum of the money that can be exchanged, in the first place, for families on low incomes, families that have many children, and also, for pensioners.

There is a confused situation regarding the strikes. On the one side, I came to the conclusion from the conversations with the deputies of the legislature that the strike movement is subsiding. On the other side, as Lysenko, chairman of the republican strike committee, said in a conversation with me, four railway stations, including that in the capital, declared today that they are ceasing freight services.

The fishing port, belonging to the Estonian Rybprom, has also stopped work. According to Lysenko, the referendum that has been conducted in the working collectives of the Estonian and the Pribaltiyskaya state regional electric power stations that are now of key importance to the republic shows that eight out of every nine support the strikers. Nevertheless, the power engineering specialists are still working.

Lysenko also said that the workers are having hard times. Some enterprises have been on strike for almost a week already. The workers do not receive any benefits but frequently receive telephoned anonymous threats. But the workers—and they are mostly of non-Estonian nationality—do not intend to call off their act of protest because they understand that this strike is their last chance to achieve their demands.

The only thing, if one can say so, that is of some comfort is that according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs reports no serious breaches of law and incidents, neither yesterday nor today, have been registered in the republic in relation to the exchange of the banknotes and the strikes.

Estonian Speaker Nugis Interviewed on Strike

LD2401213191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1900 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Interview with Julo Nugis, speaker of the Estonian Supreme Soviet, by correspondent Andrey Trapezhnikov; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[Text] Now about the situation in Estonia. Our special correspondent, Andrey Trapezhnikov, chats with the chairman of the republic's Supreme Soviet, Speaker Julo Nugis.

[Trapezhnikov] Esteemed speaker, the sharp battles in legislature have given way to a constructive discussion of current issues. The number of striking enterprises is decreasing. An agreement has been reached with the USSR president on the start of a political dialogue. Can it be said that the crisis in the republic is over and that Estonia will not share the fate of Latvia and Lithuania?

[Nugis] I would not dare put it like that, that the crisis has bypassed Estonia and the whole Baltic region. So far, we still have not gotten down to the true causes for the settlement of this issue. It is being said the processes are on the basis of interethnic conflicts. I flatly deny this. This is also shown by the treaty concluded with Russia. What after all, is the issue of the past few days? For many years I worked in production. I worked in a working environment. This is precisely an interethnic environment. Today, too, I am the chairman of Estonia's Union of Labor Collectives. There are over 400,000 working people within our ranks.

[Trapezhnikov] Are the workers of non-Estonian nationality who are members of the Union of Labor Collectives, which you head now, taking part in the strike?

[Nugis] No, they are not taking part and never took part. The problem we have is identical as far as economic and social problems are concerned. They are being resolved here, in our environment and in our collective.

[Trapezhnikov] Are you and the legislature and the legislative deputies succeeding now in establishing some contact with those enterprises, with the workers of those enterprises, who are on strike?

[Nugis] We have contacts and, of course, it is not only thanks to these contacts, but thanks to many methods used by us, as you can see, catastrophic events have so far not yet taken place in Estonia.

Two Swedish Trade Unionists Murdered in Estonia

AU2401192991 Paris AFP in English 1857 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Moscow, Jan 22 (AFP) — Two senior Swedish trade union officials were found dead Thursday [24 January] in Tallinn, the capital of the Baltic republic of Estonia, local Interior Ministry sources said.

Bertil Winberg, 56, and Ove Fredriksson, 50, appeared to have been beaten, but might then have frozen to death, the sources said.

Police discounted any political motive for the killing, believed to have taken place in the early hours of the morning, saying they were "99 per cent sure it was a case of robbery".

The bodies, partly stripped, were found on a vacant lot at about 1 p.m. local time, police said. The two Swedes had been seen by a porter leaving the Viru hotel in central Tallinn in the company of two women at about 3 a.m.

Mr. Winberg was chairman of the construction workers' union and a member of the executive of the Swedish Social Democratic Party. Mr. Fredriksson was chairman of the woodworkers' union.

Sweden's political parties back the nationalist movements in the Baltic republics, particularly Estonia. Some days earlier, the two trade union officials had visited the Lithuanian capital Vilnius.

TASS Reports Deaths

LD2401213491 Moscow TASS in English 2120 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS correspondent Albert Maloveryan]

[Text] Tallinn January 25 TASS—The dead bodies of two Swedish trade union activists, Ove Fredriksson and Bertil Winberg, were found in Tallinn on Thursday, on the territory of a special automobile base in a pile of sand with salt.

According to Vjalo Pihl, deputy head of the Tallinn Interior Department, a special group was set up to investigate the crime. Pihl refrained from putting forward any versions. He only said that, most probably, the Swedes had been killed, but ruled out political motivation.

Tallinn Reportedly 'Tense' During Mourning

LD2501105991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0610 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Report by correspondent Andrey Trapeznikov from Tallinn]

[Text] Good morning, the main piece of news today is that in accordance with a decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian Republic, today, 25 January 1991, has been declared a day of mourning in memory of those who lost their lives for the independence of the Latvian Republic. Mourning flags will be put up today in all towns and districts in Estonia.

In the meantime, political struggle continues in Estonia. Papers today published the decision of the Presidium of the Interregional Council of People's Deputies—delegates of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic's

[SSR] working people. It states, in particular, that the Supreme Soviet Presidium and Government of Estonia have still not examined the demands of the participants in a many-thousand-strong rally which took place in front of the legislature building on 15 January. The talks between the members of the coordinating council of towns in the northeast of Estonia and Arnold Ruutel, chairman of the Supreme Soviet, which took place yesterday failed to yield any results. Proceeding from this, the Presidium of the Interregional Council has decided to condemn the destructive activities of the leadership of the Estonian Republic, aimed at deliberately blocking the demands of the work forces. It is the view of the Interregional Council that this leads to an exacerbation of the situation in Estonia. It also decided to support the activities of work forces, local soviets, public organizations, and movements which have begun an action in defense of the economic, social, and political rights of the people of Estonia; to put forward an initiative to send an interparliamentary delegation of the Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian SSRs to see the president of the Soviet Union; to appeal to the work forces of Tallinn, Narva, Kokhtla-Yarve, Sillamyae, and other towns and rayons in the republic to support the working people's legitimate demands.

In the meantime, the strike in Estonia is continuing. Rallies are taking place in a number of towns. Observers note that the strike has entered a decisive stage. The question now is whether the strike will gather momentum, or whether it will just fade away. According to information given by a member of the Republican Strike Committee, Lysenko, 23 enterprises were on strike in the town at 1700 yesterday. Some stations of the Estonian railroad have gone on strike. At the same time, civil aviation employees have ended their strike. There are a few more reports.

A sitting of the republican Supreme Soviet Presidium took place yesterday. The chairman [as heard] of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the chairman of Estonia's KGB addressed it. They resolutely refuted the assertions of some political circles in the republic and outside it to the effect that armed formations exist in Estonia. One can merely speak of individuals possessing arms illegally. The chairman of Estonia's KGB voiced the conviction that all the defensive formations of the political movements should be disbanded. The so-called workers' brigades, or the Kaitseliit [Estonian Defense League] are registered by the Supreme Soviet Presidium and that is why their activities have no lawful foundations.

The KGB's press service has published a denial concerning the speech which Oleg Kalugin, people's deputy of the USSR, made on 20 January in the town hall. In particular, he stated that hundreds of KGB agents have arrived in Estonia. Now, on behalf of those who live in the republic, they are sending various letters and statements to the president of the Soviet Union. In the view of the press service, Kalugin's allegations that the KGB had a hand in the explosion in Tallinn on 21 January, are, likewise, groundless. So, that is the news so far.

[Announcer] Thank you, Andrey. I think that our listeners have understood that, all in all, one cannot yet call the atmosphere in Tallinn normal, as Andrey Trapeznikov described it. Normalization is still a distant prospect.

[Trapeznikov] Yes, outwardly the atmosphere is normal. Well, if a person who does not know the situation arrives here in the republic, well, he sees a normal town with transport working and clean streets and open shops. But, having become absorbed just a bit in this political atmosphere, you begin to understand that the situation still remains tense.

Opposing Views in Baltics on USSR Referendum

LD2501071791 Riga Domestic Service in Russian 0433 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Text] According to international law, the referendum planned for 17 March in the Soviet Union is illegal for Estonia and its results will be unlawful. This point of view was expressed yesterday in a decision adopted at a sitting of the Committee of Estonia. It calls for the active boycotting of the referendum. In turn, in our republic, (?Ivars Revisons), deputy chairman of the People's Front, has said that Latvia is ready to hold this referendum. He is sure that the majority of inhabitants will be for the restoration of the Latvian Republic.

Officials Ask for World Support Against Moscow

PM2401112191 Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE in Danish 22 Jan 91 p 4

[RITZAUS BUREAU report: "Ministers Ask for Help"]

[Text] A study trip to Denmark for an agricultural delegation from the Baltic countries yesterday developed into a political visit when the three Baltic representatives called a news conference and made an urgent appeal for help to the world community. "If the rest of the world does not react resolutely against the central government in the Soviet Union, the people of Estonia will be subjected to the same 'script' that has been used in the past few days in Lithuania and Latvia," Lithuanian Agriculture Minister Vytautas Knasys said.

Together with Estonian Deputy Agriculture Minister Roland Nymann and Gatis Kruze, a representative of the Latvian Agriculture Ministry, Knasys held a news conference at the International Press Center in Copenhagen. The three Baltic leaders appealed to the world community to react immediately to events in Riga in the early hours of Monday morning, after at least five people were killed when Soviet elite troops from the notorious Black Berets attacked the Interior Ministry in the Latvian capital.

The three agricultural experts spoke on behalf of their governments and legislatures and said that the best way the rest of the world could help the Baltic countries was by recognizing their independence.

"That would remove the central government's argument that the rest of the world should not interfere in internal matters," Estonia's Roland Nymann said.

In addition the rest of the world should demand the withdrawal of the elite troops from the Baltic countries.

"The economic aid to the Soviet Union should be suspended as long as military force is being used and innocent and unarmed people are being killed and wounded," Knasys said.

"If the troops are withdrawn the economic aid should be given direct to the individual republics and not through central government—that simply reinforces the economic anarchy," he said.

In conclusion, the Baltic agricultural delegation urged that international delegations be sent to the Baltic countries to see for themselves what is happening there and how the people view the situation.

Analyst Views Baltic Attempts To Pressure West

LD2301212591 Moscow TASS in English 2101 GMT 23 Jan 91

[By TASS political analyst Yevgeniy Babenko]

[Text] Moscow January 23 TASS—The pilgrimage by representatives of various rank from the Baltic republics to the West has been continuing for quite some time and can hardly surprise anyone. Hopes for a kind foreign uncle, who will send big presents and will help settle acute economic problems in the Baltics have so far been in vain. Nevertheless bows before foreign countries continue and are even multiplying.

However, priorities in such trips have shifted. On Tuesday, deputy chairmen of the Lithuanian and Latvian parliaments and a minister of the Estonian Government, in Washington on a private visit, were received by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

The underlying theme of the Balts' appeal to the American leadership, as they themselves revealed was as follows: It is necessary to cancel the Soviet-American summit meeting scheduled for February 11-13 in Moscow and use economic sanctions against the Soviet Union.

I would like to dwell on two things. Firstly, Baltic leaders often speak about Moscow's "blatant interference" in their affairs, "infringement of sovereignty", etc. The question arises: What are then the calls for sanctions and the cancellation of the Soviet-U.S. summit? Is it not a clear interference in relations between the two states, whose sovereignty can hardly be questioned?

Secondly, those who visit Western capitals have become widely familiar there. These are the very same persons who endlessly repeat their point of view. They abide by the principle the more you talk, at least something will remain in the ears of their listeners. It should be admitted that Baltic representatives succeed to a point. Some in the West already call on their politicians to return to old ways in relations with the Soviet Union.

Perhaps, when considering internal events in the Soviet Union one should listen not only to local leaders who are prepared to sacrifice the end of the cold war, the disarmament process and nearly the entire world order to satisfy their ambitions?

It seems words from the USSR president's statement reverberated through Western political circles:

"It will be regrettable and dangerous if as a result of such a wrong interpretation achievements in international relations over the past years will be threatened".

It is much easier to destroy than to construct. A nearly-completed building of new international relations can be destroyed in one hour, by a single thoughtless step.

"The West should carefully weigh the pros and cons before helping the toppling of the Soviet president by exerting economic pressure on the USSR"—we did not invent this warning. We just cited the comment by the British DAILY TELEGRAPH.

RSFSR

RSFSR Supreme Soviet Proceedings 24 Jan

LD2401231291

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 1854 GMT carries a recorded relay on the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) Supreme Soviet session in Moscow on 24 January.

The proceedings open with procedural debate on setting up a drafting committee. RSFSR President Boris Yeltsin reads out the names of the proposed members. This is followed by a discussion of who should be in and who out. An unnamed deputy says the list has already been coordinated with the parliamentary groups. The list is adopted.

At 1905 GMT, Yeltsin says Ivan Silayev should speak while the drafting committee is sitting. Silayev says that there has been a shortage of the relevant banknotes, preventing the implementation of the presidential decree on the surrender of large-denomination notes. Instructions have gone out to banks. The three-day deadline is too short, because people in outlying regions are disadvantaged. Discretion has been given to banks to extend the deadline until 1 February. It is being proposed to increase the limit for pensioners from 200 to 500 rubles. Silayev appeals for the situation to be explained to people as quickly as possible.

Deputy Iryumin asks how the commissions will determine the source of people's money—whether it has been earned or not. Silayev replies that people have to declare large sums.

A deputy says if there are different regional deadlines, this may lead to a rush of money-changers to specific parts of the country.

Silayev then says that local commissions must act as a restraint. Continuing the question and answer session, Silayev says that the RSFSR Government only learned about the move at the last moment.

Yeltsin says there is no need to vote on the dealine issue and pensioners, as outlined by Silayev, because there is clearly support. Discussion follows. It is proposed by Yeltsin that the Supreme Soviet "take notice" of the government statement from Silayev. Yeltsin says that the Supreme Soviet will continue to watch the situation.

At 1929 GMT, Deputy Filshin makes a statement on a Vremya item yesterday and two articles in the press today concerning RSFSR support for the British company (Dove Trading International) which has plans to invest in the revival of the Ural countryside. He says a news conference will be held today to demand an inquiry into misrepresentation of the facts.

An unidentified deputy says Vremya must broadcast a retraction. Filshin says the RSFSR Government is not a guarantor or intermediary in the deal, but merely says it will give assistance to the deal between the companies involved. An Omsk deputy asks for more details of the deal. Filshin explains that Chelyabinsk and Kurgan Oblasts and Komi Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic are to provide part of the goods producted as a result of the proposed investments there. The proportion is to be agreed according to the relevant laws.

A deputy then questions the "altruism" of foreign firms and Filshin's role in all this. Another deputy is worried about the implications for natural resources. Filshin says that the alternative is to borrow money, which will simply be used up. This way, part of the output boosts exports.

A deputy asks what the Organization for the Revival of the Ural Countryside is. Yeltsin asks: Shall we appoint a commission? Just a little one? A deputy demands that the deputies who acted as intermediaries be named. Filshin names two of them, as gasps from the audience are heard.

A deputy suggests that existing Supreme Soviet committees look into the whole affair. Another says to set up a commission. Yeltsin asks for names to be submitted later for the commission.

At 1955 GMT, Vice President Ruslan Khasbulatov asks Sergey Shakhray to speak for the Drafting Commission to present the new draft of the document on the Baltic events. He says:

"First of all, I would like to appeal to the people's deputies who are occupying directly opposing positions to have an understanding attitude toward the work that has been done by the drafting commission."

He continues: "The 10th clause is an important one. It is established in it that the introduction on the territory of the RSFSR of measures provided for by a state of emergency regime is impermissile without the consent of the Supreme Soviet, and in the period between sessions without the consent of the Presidium. In order that the legal vacuum on the level of Russia should be filled here, the Presidium is charged with accelerating the drawing up of a law of the Russian Federation on a state of emergency.

"I will remind you that on 3 April 1990, the USSR Supreme Soviet adopted a law on a law-based regime for a state of emergency on a Union level. But, unfortunately, in that law there is a possibility of introducing a state of emergency in one republic or another, even without the consent, and possibly without the knowledge, of the supreme bodies of power of that republic. Here we consider that such consent, either of the Supreme Soviet or of the Presidium, is obligatory. Here we are implementing Article 76 of the RSFSR Constitution. What is more, there is already information available that the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs and the USSR Ministry of Defense signed and adopted a joint order according to which, under the guise of fighting crime—which is, of course, very, very important, here we all support the measures in this direction, I think—gives the right to use armed forces on the streets of towns and cities and in Moscow, this regime is dated 1 February. A number of these measures literally coincide with the law on a law-based regime for a state of emergency. Therefore I think that the legislature of Russia should either give its consent or not give its consent regarding the introduction of such measures on the territory of the Russian Federation."

A deputy says that some agreed provisions have been omitted from this draft, particularly on the army. Yeltsin says this idea stemmed from him. Deputies make a number of comments on specific points in the document, as arguments rage.

At 2016 GMT, Khasbulatov suggests votes on whether to put the document to an open vote. This passes. A Tuva deputy says that the wording represents interference in the affairs of another republic. An open vote is taken on whether to adopt the document "as a basis." The vote does not pass. Khasbulatov asks for a vote on whether to discuss the document article by article. There are objections. Further interventions are made for and against voting article by article. Khasbulatov says to return to the draft another time after further consultations.

The relay ends at 2030 GMT.

Legislature Fails To Adopt Resolution on Baltics

LD2401203991 Moscow TASS in English 1953 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By TASS correspondent Boris Zverev]

[Text] Moscow January 24 TASS—"The parliament suffered a defeat today," First Vice President of the Russian Federation Ruslan Khasbulatov said at the end of today's sitting, after several unsuccessful attempts of the republican parliament to adopt a resolution on a political situation in the country.

The discussion of the document began on Monday after Boris Yeltsin's report about a political situation in the country, made at the January 21 sitting of the parliament. The first sitting of the parliament showed the resolve of some deputies to torpedo a resolution, denouncing power practices in the settlement of political problems, and a proposal on personal responsibility of those who made possible the tragic developments in Lithuania and Latvia. The proposed draft resolution did not receive the sufficient number of votes and could not be adopted as a basis of a final resolution. The same happened with the draft resolution proposed today, which was the third one.

It was worked out by the conciliatory commission, that included representatives of the leading parliamentary groups. When presenting the draft resolution, chairman of the legislation committee Sergey Shakhray insistently called the attention of deputies to the fact that the document is based on a compromise. This was probably the reason why it was not approved either. After the defeat suffered by the draft resolution, Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the session, gave up further attempts to adopt any document containing a clear assessment of the situation in the Baltic region and the country in general. "No resolution will be adopted," he said with obvious disappointment.

The proposal of opponents of the first draft resolution to confine themselves to adopting the helpless recommendation "to take into account Boris Yeltsin's report" was not approved by the majority of deputies.

It was decided to continue the discussion of the draft resolution at separate sessions of the chambers. The next plenary meeting of the Russian parliament will be held in a week.

'Moral' Support Noted

LD2401195591 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1628 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Interview with Viktor Leonidovich Sheynis, Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet deputy, by Lyudmila Semina, from the "RSFSR Supreme Soviet Diary" program; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Semina] Deputy Viktor Leonidovich Sheynis told us in an interview that, incidentally, in his view, the formulation which mentions protection for the Russian-speaking population [in the Baltics] is, on the whole, incorrect.

[Sheynis] I have visited the Baltic republics and have talked with Russians, Poles, Jews, and Belorussians. Among them I have seen many people who wholeheartedly support the striving of these republics for independence. Therefore, this is an extremely complicated issue, too. The main problem is not the problem of the Russian-speaking population. There are too many speculations about it. The main problem is an attempt to seize power in an unconstitutional manner, through violence. As a matter of fact, those deputies who voted in our legislature against even a softened draft resolution gave support to their comrades who had tried to seize power by unconstitutional means using armed force.

I would like to stress one circumstance. From the moral point of view, the democratic resolution has won, after all, because about 111 to 122 deputies voted for the resolution on various occasions, and about 50 or over 40 deputies voted against it, and about 20 deputies abstained. Only a few votes were short for the resolution to be adopted, and this, again, is linked to the deformed structure of our Supreme Soviet which allows an enormous proportion of deputies to be on its lists while shirking work. That is, we needed a majority to adopt the resolution and this majority did not materialize, not because the majority is against it, but because too many deputies stay away from meetings.

[Semina] There was a proposal to publish the draft and the results of a named voting in order to make clear the distribution of forces at the Russian Supreme Soviet. However, a decision was made to come back to the draft at a separate meeting of the chambers.

RSFSR Amends Presidential Decree on Banknotes

LD2401142491 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1200 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The session of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet continues in Moscow. At the microphone is our correspondent Andrey Nikiforov:

[Nikiforov] At today's afternoon session, deputies heard a report by Silayev, chairman of the republic's Council of Ministers, and took cognizance of the resolution of Russia's government on the procedures for the implementation on RSFSR territory of the president's decree on USSR State Bank 50- and 100-ruble bills ceasing to be legal tender and on restrictions on withdrawals of cash from citizens' accounts. This document is intended to reduce tension during the implementation of the decree. The document is very important, and I will try to quote it as closely to the original as possible.

To begin with, the USSR presidential decree is accepted for implementation, and the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers is accepted for guidance, but with the following amendments and addenda:

First, 50- and 100-ruble banknotes totalling more than 200 rubles are accepted for exchange from pensioners by the decision of rayon executive committee commissions, for up to 500 rubles.

Next, the Central Bank of the RSFSR is permitted to amend the time limit for the exchange of banknotes in accordance with the territorial features of individual regions of the RSFSR, but not beyond 1 February 1991.

Banknotes are accepted from citizens for exchange regardless of the availability of notes to be given in return at banks and enterprises, with checks, receipts, and other pledges guaranteeing that cash will be received when available, and given to citizens as the need arises.

The government agrees with the proposal of the RSFSR Central Bank that the Bank's establishments should work round the clock during the period of exchange of banknotes. One other thing: the RSFSR Ministry of Internal Affairs undertakes to adopt the necessary measures to protect banking establishments and maintain public order on the republic's territory. The document has come into force and has been dispatched to all the bank's establishments on the territory of the RSFSR.

One other brief piece of news: Filshin, deputy chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers, reported to deputies today in connection with information published about a trade deal between two firms—the Soviet Association for the Revival of the Urals Rural Areas, and the foreign Dove Trading International Company—and the involvement of the republic's government in it. Stressing that the government is not acting as either intermediary or guarantor in this deal, but is merely giving its consent and support to it, Filshin gave clear and well-argued information about the mechanism of the deal and the financial side of the issue. From this it follows that nothing illegal was envisaged, and no one was intending to line their pockets from it. On the contrary, it was a matter of a business contract, with considerable advantages for our country. The deputy chairman of Russia's Council of Ministers views the information on this issue published in the central press and all the attempts to oppose this contract as actions which do not promote the stabilization of our economic situation or the development of foreign economic ties.

The evening session will meet in a few minutes time. I end my report here.

Silayev Speaks on Banknotes

LD2401235191 Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian 1854 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Speech and answers to questions by Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) Council of Ministers Chairman Ivan Stepanovich Silayev at RSFSR Supreme Soviet Session in Moscow on 24 January—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Silayev] Esteemed comrades, members of the Supreme Soviet, esteemed Presidium, as a matter of fact, we all are at the epicenter of the events connected with the issuing of the presidential decree and Comrade Pavlov's decision. Naturally, as far as time has allowed, being unprepared for evaluating it immediately on its publication, we have been examining the issue continuously, and it was a subject for discussion at the sitting of the Federation Council and, yesterday, at our sitting of the Council of Ministers with the participation of all leaders of executive bodies. We had various options, and we were obliged to react to this, since, by decision of the Supreme Soviet, at least the main legislative documents have to be considered both by the legislative authorities and by the executive ones, and ratified or not ratified. Thus, from the legal point of view, we were obliged to consider and discuss these questions.

What were the main signals received by us immediately after the documents had been published, taking into account our vast territory? First of all, the absence of banknotes of a denomination lower than R50 in most of our savings banks and at enterprises. This was the main issue which has actually caused great agitation and indignation. There are cases in which indignation and wrath have already led to certain incidents in various regions of the country. Counters have been broken and windows smashed. Luckily, there have not been any serious actions or developments in the course of these events. But that was a very important question, and we have sent a verbal message and have agreed with our banks and the Ministry of Finances—there is such a verbal order in the localities—to accept sums in accordance with the decree and the main provisions of the decision and to issue corresponding official receipts in the form of checks or soem other promissory notes for exchange as these monetary means reach banks and enterprises. It is already in effect now and, to a certain degree, it has started operating in the places where it is being acted upon.

The second issue is the time limits for implementation. You know that a 3-day time limit has been named. For our faraway regions, such as vladivostok, Khabarovsk Kray, and others, this is an extremely hard task, of course—not only that, but also in terms of the complexity and the large scale of work. In particular, Muscovites, comrade Luzhkov visited me, and he merely voiced the firm conviction that they needed at least 4 days more to be added to the 3 days. One need not mention the fact that we have regions in Yakutia, in the

Far North, where there are artels and other labor collectives, as it were, that work totally separated from main roads, bank branches, and so on. They, on the whole, are in a very complex situation. We have given permission—we sent to the banks, to our republican, Russian Bank, a directive to act at the discretion of the savings banks themselves—well, taking account, nevertheless, of the decisions that are already being made in other republics, we include in that document the phrase "but no later than 1 February." That's that.

The next question: We have now given such permission verbally, but we do, of course, need an official stance. There is, naturally, a serious question regarding the scale of the exchanges, of the volume of the banknotes that are eligible and are accepted for exchange. We had various options—from the most, let's say, decisive and large-scale to what we have presented to you today. We have rejected the idea of, let's say, R2,000 to R10,000. But, as regards pensioners, we are, nevertheless, tabling the proposal to talk in terms not of R200, but of R500.

It was hard for us to learn from other republics, but I did at least speak personally to Comrade Kebich about Belorussia. They provided an appropriate instruction regarding the time scale too. They have also said "up to 1 February," including for pensioners. They have even, as he told me—admittedly, verbally—given permission, depending on the specific situation, for up to R1,000 [to be exchanged]. But, I'll remind you, the decision says that R200 can be exchanged, and larger sums are accepted in a suitable claim by commissions, and the commissions will have to examine the matter within a 10-day period. They may be able to come up with a decision of up to R1,000.

We offer, nevertheless, and in our draft decision we have written down that the figure 500 should be placed instead of the 200, subject to exchange in return for identification shown. Having agreed on it with banks, we have organized around the clock work. And they have accepted the idea.

We have organized State Bank and Ministry of Finance experts to be on duty around the clock so as to make it possible for them at any time of the day to receive information, to answer questions, provide answers, and to give appropriate consultations. We gave orders to our Ministry of Interior bodies, and they have already strengthened the protection and defense of the main banking establishments and enterprises, and made appropriate increases in militia reinforcements to maintain public order. At present we have no information about any very serious or gangster-like attacks or burglaries. We have been informed that in Leningrad, for example, two citizens died in the crush while lining up to exchange money. That was not a result of any physical violence, but occurred in a line in a nerve-wracking situation, as it were.

We have some inconclusive, and so far officially unconfirmed, information that there are certain very rare cases of pensioners with larger savings being disappointed and very gravely upset by this situation. As a whole, however, I talked today to a number of leaders in the executive bodies of power, in the Altay, for example. I have also spoken with Moscow and Leningrad. Generally speaking, as to be expected in this acute unexpected and even alarming situation, exacerbated also by the shortage and complete absence of information, the main part of the population of our republic dashed to savings banks yesterday morning. But workers should have realized that they had to go to their enterprises and sort out these affairs in their relevant accountancy offices. So, what happened was the result of a lack of and the wrong timing of information. [passage omitted]

Well, proceeding from all this, we would consider it essential—yesterday I set out our initial position, following an all-round discussion and exchange of views with Boris Nikolayevich, concerning the things we regard as essential and concerning the oral instructions, permissions, and agreement given by us. That is why I would ask you—it is still topical, half of the time has already elapsed, especially as far as the remote regions are concerned and the other issues I set out are acutely topical and the sooner we do it officially and send it to all our regions, towns, and oblasts and put it out through the TASS channels and the local press, the sooner, in all probability, we shall be able to somehow settle the processes that are taking place; the main task being—having adopted the president's law—to set the task of its implementation on the territory of the Russian Federation. Thank you.

[Yeremin] Deputy Yeremin, constituency No. 876, soviet of the republic. [passage omitted] In order to reach a verdict about whether a sum is illegal, investigations have to be carried out and documents have to be collected, and so on. The chairman of the USSR State Bank board said in an interview yesterday that common sense has to be used. I don't know of such a concept in law as common sense.

[Silayev] I see what you're getting at, and I'll set out my own view. The point is that our laws stipulate that earnings from 10,000 rubles upwards need to be declared. To some extent, I sympathize with the way you put the question. But, we have time. The reference is to a 10-day deadline within which the commissions are to examine these matters and make these decisions. It seems to me that for the time being we can think about using the article which makes it necessary to declare sums of 10,000 ruoles and above. But, we have to do some thinking here, and if you bear in mind that we have time in hand, we—in particular the RSFSR Council of Ministers—will be able to come to a definitive decision.

[Yeltsin] Third microphone.

[Kiselev] Kiselev, 123d territorial constituency, Leningrad. Esteemed Ivan Stepanovich, my first question is this. In carrying out these measures we don't essentially have the technical backup for implementing them. Specifically, is the government providing for additional pay and compensatory remuneration for employees of the savings banks and all the other organizations that are going to be involved in this?

[Silayev] Yes, quite right, it is provided for.

[Kiselev] Secondly, the draft decision says that the deadline for exchange can be extended in certain regions. Here we could come up against situations whereby, if in some particular region the deadline is longer than in other regions of the country, people will rush in from the other regions to change their remaining banknotes. Could you comment on this, and on how this can be combatted? And my final and most important point is this: We can have different views of this step by the Union government. What is clear is that we cannot today oppose it in any way. It would just cause chaos in the country. But don't you think that we should give an appropriate assessment of the desirability of this move in our decision?

[Silayev] I intend to refrain from replying to your last question because that is something for you to decide. Out of considerations of seeking some sort of accord and cooperation we drafted the document in the form in which you see it. But from the legislative point of view, it is quite possible to give that sort of assessment. I can't rule that out. As to your first question, we have considered this. Firstly, Boris Nikilayevich [Yeltsin] proposed that the time scale be restricted, while we were giving the republican Gosbank an unlimited time scale to carry this out. Obviously, in some measure the commissions will have to act as a restraining factor locally, as well as Gosbank branches themselves. Such a possibility cannot be ruled out. To some extent, if malefactors and other dishonest people attempt to do this, it is theoretically possible. I cannot rule it out.

[Boronenko] Deputy Boronenko, Chelyabinsk Oblast. Ivan Stepanovich, the reform has been in preparation for a long time. Did you know what it would consist of? Secondly, did the heads of the RSFSR Ministry of Finance and RSFSR [State] Bank know what it would consist of and take part in its preparation?

[Silayev] Thank-you. I can answer in the negative. I personally, and our government, and the RSFSR Ministry of Finance and RSFSR Gosbank, respectively, learned about this at the same time as you. In addition, we began to worry when we found out that telegrams had arrived at the relevant financial and banking organizations saying that on a particular night, the night of the 21st to 23rd [as heard] certain senior officials should be on duty. On the basis of this, we tried to find out the reason why. We did not succeed. And it was only at 1900 when we received a document from the president that we realized what was going on, and we worked continuously right until the morning of the 23rd [January].

Maliya on Money Exchange

LD2301153791 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1000 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Interview with Mikhail Dmitriyevich Maliya, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR, by Lyudmila Semina at the House of Soviets in Moscow on 23 January—recorded]

[Text] [Semina] Some very serious work is currently under way at the Russian Supreme Soviet, very difficult work. On Monday, as you know, the political situation in the country and the republic was discussed at a plenary session. Yesterday there was a conference of the leaders of Russian soviets at various levels. Deputies spoke about ways of making the soviets' power more real, more fruitful, and more effective, and they discussed the republic's sovereignty. Today the Russian Soviet of the Federation, headed by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, is discussing the provisions of a draft federation treaty, and at an enlarged session of the Council of Ministers, taking part in which are the leaders of the soviets, they are discussing the economic situation in Russia and pricing policy. Council of Ministers Chairman Ivan Stepanovich Silayev has now left in order to consult with the leadership of the Supreme Soviet on what to do about the very difficult situation in the country and in the republic as a result of yesterday's presidential decree on withdrawing 50- and 100-ruble Gosbank notes of the 1961 pattern. The point is that telegrams are coming in here expressing extreme alarm, and the Russian government and Supreme Soviet are considering how to help people, and how to react to it. They say, for example, that in Chukotka people in the villages have categorically refused to change the money—it takes them a week to travel from their work teams to the state farms, and there isn't any money on the state farms. I asked, for the moment, for preliminary information on this situation from Mikhail Dmitriyevich (?Maliya), deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR].

[Maliya] I would like to say that the president is to be congratulated on a brilliantly conducted operation, in terms of secrecy. On the whole, I do not refute the usefulness of such an action, the withdrawal of large-denomination banknotes from the hands of black-market dealers, if they had not succeeded in changing them before today, and from the hands of foreign holders, if they hadn't also got rid of this money. If that were the case it would have been welcomed. But in the Soviet Union, in these conditions, when the republics formally have sovereign rights, the leadership of the republics—the Russian republic, at least—had not idea of what had been prepared and what would be done prior to the disclosure of the president's package yesterday evening at 1900. This is not literally so, and the Ivan Stepanovich Silayev, chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers, in a direct conversation with Comrade Pavlov asked: What is in this package? Pavlov said: When you open the package, you'll find out. In this sense, the government, just like all of the citizens of our republic, received the news hot, as they say, and now we have to react to it. We have not made any hasty moves, and we have not prohibited the presidential decree from taking effect, although under a law of the Russian Federation all instructions from Union organs are subject to ratification either by the Supreme Soviet or by the Council of Ministers. But according to this telegram, the government is ordered, or recommended, to carry out the decree. At the same time, as has been said here, Russia is a large place—you need days to travel from a forest, plot of land, or from a mine, to change this money. Not everyone has heard the report.

[Semina] Even in Moscow, what gigantic queues there will be. We are disorganized people.

[Maliya] We do not understand how the millions, tens of millions of pensioners who will now go to the savings bank to change this money will be able to change it there. It will clearly not be possible to do this in three days at the enterprises, and so their will be much disorganization. Tomorrow the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR will make a decision regarding the republic's overall attitude to this act of the central organs. At present the government is working out its position, and in the coming hours an appopriate telegram to the localities will be prepared.

Things have turned out in such a way that the chairmen of the soviet executive committees of the republic, and chairmen of the soviets of oblasts and large towns, are currently here in Moscow. We were also extremely surprised by the fact that precisely at this moment the USSR Supreme Soviet, which has handed its powers to the president, is resting, instead of actively intervening now in the situation in the country as a whole.

I want to tell our citizens that the government is making a balanced and sober assessment of the situation, and we will be able to notify the people of the measures which Russia considers essential to take in order to keep control of the situation and carry out, or address the president for, certain alterations to this decree. This information will come through in the very near future.

[Semina] I think that the Russian Government will do everything to ensure that people don't suffer. Pensioners are telephoning here at the House of Soviets, they have found our correspondent center's number, invalids are crying—I have saved up for my funeral, 2,000 rubles, who is going to change it for me, how am I going to manage? In any case, even if they change it, it will cost people a great deal in terms of their nerves. Everything possible has to be done

[Maliya] All right, I would also like to add that I cannot give any absolutely precise promises to our citizens at the present moment, but I would like to endorse your assumption that the government of the republic will do everything to soften the harsh blow of this decree. To a substantial degree it won't be dealing a blow to the sacks of money, but to the small packets, the small jars kept behind icons or in other places in case of death and other things, with these notes which we previously called hundreds or half-hundreds. These measures will be taken.

Deputy Says Creation of Russian Army 'Mistake'

LD2401185991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1628 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Speech by RSFSR Supreme Soviet Deputy Dmitriy Antonovich Volkogonov at the RSFSR Supreme Soviet session in Moscow on 24 January; from the "RSFSR Supreme Soviet Diary" program, presented by Lyudmila Semina; first paragraph is Semina introduction—recorded]

[Text] [Semina] Deputies returned today to the draft decision on the political situation in the country in connection with the events in the Baltic region. On Monday approval of the draft was a few votes short, and so further work had to be done on it. The draft dealt with condemnation of unconstitutional acts and the use of military force against the civilian population and the need for measures to prevent the organization of illegal committees and the protection of the Russian-speaking population. And the debate was again deadlocked. A group of deputies blocked the draft. Dmitriy Antonovich Volkogonov, deputy, historian and military man, took the microphone.

[Volkogonov] It really is extremely sad. I think that parliament has been defeated today. Yes, there are shortcomings in this compromise version. But we must be prepared for the fact that we have extreme wings, and it is sometimes very difficult to fully reconcile different points of view. It was a very conciliatory compromise document, but it did express concern both at the situation of our compatriots, and it said that there should be no more interethnic conflicts and that we should somehow bring influence to bear on the forces attempting to use military force to change the situation, and issue them a warning.

Hegel expressed the very wise thought that when the judges and the laws fail to function in society, then vengeance begins to hold sway. I think that many people will wince, because Russia could neither say anything in defense of the Russian-speaking population nor condemn the central leadership for the use of military force. This is a very sad fact.

At the end of the day, the point is this. We all condemn the use of force to tackle political problems. That is unanimous. On the second point there is less unanimity, and there are various points of view. Some believe that in order to defend Russia, we need to set up a Russian army. I think this would be a great mistake, a step toward civil war. But what are we to do? There is a very good move we could make—not so much a move, but a line of action. We should ensure that as far as our all-Union army—the majority of which is located on Russian territory—is concerned, Russia should play a role in it proportional to its relative weight in terms of appointments, its functioning, and its military organizational development. Thus we would be dealing, to this extent, with all the steps taken in this army, our single army. So I would like to make this proposal. We have, for instance, a supreme body which determines military organizational development, which determines the nature of the functioning of the army and its use—the Defense Council. I would like to propose that the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of our republic should become a member of the Defense Council. Then no important decision could be taken that bypasses the leaders of our republic. That is as far as the Defense Council is concerned.

And another point: We have military councils in the armies, in the military districts, whereby according to the regulations—this was the case until recently, perhaps something has changed now, but I am not aware of it—the first secretary of the relevant oblast party committee has always been a member of the military councils. We could make substantial changes here, of course, to make the chairmen of the relevant soviets members of the military councils of the armies and military districts. We could exert a substantial influence on these things. We could bring about a situation in which the tackling of many political matters in the territories would not bypass the relevant soviets. I think that it was very hasty of us today to decide to do without an article-by-article discussion, because we could have very substantially influenced subsequent processes. But one would at any rate always like us to draw lessons from the worst things that happen.

RSFSR Adopts Decision on Rural Development

LD2401184191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] We have received news of decisions adopted by the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Council of Ministers. These decisions serve a single purpose: to implement the decisions of the Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies on the social development of the countryside. These documents envision the creation of a reliable and broad network of roads in rural areas, the extension of the gas supply system, and the development of water supplies in the villages. The decisions cover the duration of the five-year plan. They set out specific tasks for specific departments and organizations.

RSFSR Supreme Soviet Continues Work 25 Jan

LD2501105391 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0700 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Text] The Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet continues its work today. The sitting will be held in committees and commissions. Also meeting will be the Committee for Food, which will consider priority measures to improve supplies to the republic's population. In the middle of the afternoon, a sitting of the Supreme Soviet's Presidium is planned.

Silayev Describes New 'Innovation Council'

LD2501094991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 0601 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Interview with Ivan Silayev, chairman of the Russian Federation Council of Ministers, by unidentified correspondent, place and date not given; from the "Television News Service" program—live or recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] What do you think are the first tasks of thie innovation council, and how do the government and people see it?

[Silayev] We want any engineer, any enthusiasts, and maybe not at all engineers, any person or a group of people who have already something in mind, but cannot realize it because of the roads, because it is too expensive, they do not have enough means, and so on and so forth, to be able to realize their intentions. And a special fund was set up for this very reason, as opposed to just financing this innovation council—and we have chosen people especially carefully with the help of our sociological group.

Here we did not need any knowledge of where this particular person worked before, whether he has any professional skills in this or that field; we just needed gifted people, people possessing natural talents. We managed to get together such a composition. It is not at all large; it is approximately 10 people. And the main thing is that our aim was and is now to give an opportunity to everybody who is able to create, not just to throw ideas, but to those who have already achieved something, let's say, by constructing models, or carrying out experiments and so on and so forth, to those who have something at their disposal, to give an opportunity to them to practically implement those things they have made, that they have achieved. Obviously, it will coincide with the interests of republic's national economy.

We can already see some very interesting solutions. I would not say that a process incorporating these ideas in mass production is already going on. We must learn this, first of all. Before, we used to have a large gap between an idea, a practical solution, let's say, and implementation of it in mass production. These certain blots from the past still exist. But we involve the production side and show them what is advantageous to produce. We have means for this. We have economic support. And I would say that nowadays we also have conditions of conversion that are very helpful.

Enterprises which face difficult circumstances as a result of conversion search for the way out. And the way out is to switch their capacities to tackling social problems. That is why we invite all enthusiasts who already have something planned, who want to suggest something, we invite them to implement their ideas. May they be more daring and come to our innovation council. We promise them our all-around support.

Radio Station's Lithuania Coverage Lambasted

PM2401124191 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 18 Jan 91 First Edition p 2

["Rejoinder" by TASS correspondent A. Yurkin: "Radio Thoroughbreds"]

[Text] The ideological provocation experts claim that the more monstrous the lie, the more willing people are to believe it. They illustrate this principle as follows: The important thing is to lead a horse to water—it will do its own drinking! If it will not approach the turbid stream, the rider has legs and rein to control it...

It is surprising, but true: To all appearances, this is the principle the journalists of the independent, so called, radio station "Ekho Moskvy" follow in their work. Last Sunday and Monday it filled the air waves with far from innocuous emotions: It was urging civil disobedience and fueling interethnic strife. The gray mare of disinformation was galloping at full tilt around the course of prejudice and lies.

For instance, it was reported from Vilnius that, "anticipating a gas attack," V. Landsbergis had "bade farewell" to Muscovites. As it turned out, in no way was he preparing to die at the hands of attackers. Because, actually, there was no attack, just as there was no farewell. It was the invention of an "Ekho Moskvy" correspondent, something he put out to supercharge the atmosphere. Even K. Prunskiene was indignant when she learned that "Ekho Moskvy" had announced that a government in exile had been formed in Vilnius. But her statement did not cool the radio jockeys' heads either. They spurred their gray mare on again.

This time they zeroed in on the Army. First the radio jockeys reported "atrocities," and then the "mass defection" by soldiers to Landsbergis' side. In short, they put out everything their imagination could conjure up, but kept silent about the most important things: about the treacherous bullet in the officer's back, about nationalists opening fire. These very facts, which shed true light on the events in Lithuania, were given by the republic's internal affairs minister, reporting on the situation to Moscow. The radio station has kept quiet about many things, but it did give airtime to a nationalist fanatic, who said that he would kill, kill, kill... There were also people on the air who said that they were "ashamed to call themselves Russians." The hodge-podge of lies and insults against the USSR president, the Communist Party, and all those who have their own view of the situation formed a single foul-smelling flood that engulfed the radio audience.

How is one supposed to view the fact that in the center of a great power's capital there is a functioning radio station that is reviling our constitutional system, urging illegal action, and coordinating it? Indeed, not to mince words, "Ekho Moskvy" is engaged in incitement. Remember the way the radio station let its imagination run riot last fall during the ballyhoo over the "military coup," heaping abuse on the country's Armed Forces! Then it issued a series of warnings of "progroms," which did not occur, of course. Now it is the turn of operation "Baltic." In its conduct of the operation, "Ekho Moskvy" displays an amazing degree of synchronization and thematic coordination with foreign stations, surpassing even the famous Radio Liberty in its systematic fabrications.

One would like to know why a hostile radio transmitter, equipped with modern foreign facilities, is operating just off our holy of holies—Red Square. Where does it get the cash to be able to flaunt itself round the clock? Whose pocket does the money come from?

I believe many people, particularly Russians, would like answers to these questions from the most authoritative sources, for example, from the USSR Prosecutor's Office. Swiftly, before the horse is spurred on to sound the bugle call to arms.

RSFSR Deputies Criticize Yeltsin Baltic Line

PM2401144691 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 24 Jan 91 First Edition p 3

["Draft RSFSR Supreme Soviet Resolution" signed by "RSFSR people's deputies": "On the Political Situation in the RSFSR"]

[Text] The RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet notes that the complex political situation is due primarily to the deteriorating socioeconomic situation in the republic. The RSFSR Council of Ministers has not fulfilled the instructions of the extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies on drawing up a program for economic stabilization and the switch to market relations. The RSFSR Supreme Soviet has approved the republic budget for 1991, while the plan for economic and social development of the RSFSR this year has yet to be compiled. The process of forming the republic's government has not yet been completed.

Instead of organizing the work of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium and Council of Ministers to fulfill the resolutions of the extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies, the Supreme Soviet chairman has engaged in interrepublic activity which leads in effect to the disintegration of the USSR, the further exacerbation of socioeconomic relations, and the growth of interethnic conflicts. This is reflected particularly in the position of the Russian-speaking population in the Baltic republics and Moldova.

The RSFSR Supreme Soviet, noting the initiative of Supreme Soviet Chairman Comrade B.N. Yeltsin in his desire to contribute to resolving the conflicts in the Baltic republics, considers that he has in the process carried out a series of hasty, unlawful actions and exceeded his powers. The signing of a treaty in Russia's name with Latvia and Estonia ignores the fact that Latvia and Estonia have unilaterally repealed the operation of the USSR Constitution on their territory.

The 13 January 1991 appeal to the UN secretary general in the name of the RSFSR is legally groundless. B.N. Yeltsin's actions show no clear line of protecting the interests of the Russian-speaking population in the Baltic region, despite the fact that according to the Declaration of State Sovereignty the RSFSR undertakes such commitments.

RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman Comrade B.N. Yeltsin's statements on the setting up of a Russian national army are at variance with the RSFSR Constitution and the Declaration of Sovereignty. Such actions and calls, far from weakening national and social tension in the country, increase it still further. Without waiting for the results of the investigation that is under way into the causes of the tragic events in Lithuania, B.N. Yeltsin draws hasty and superficial conclusions and assessments in his public statements. At the same time the Supreme Soviet leadership has remained neutral on the dramatic events in South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast, where people are also dying and from where hundreds of refugees have fled to RSFSR territory.

The RSFSR Supreme Soviet considers that one of the main reasons for the sharp deterioration in the political situation in the Lithuanian Republic and other Union republics in the Baltic has been the activity of the republics' leadership aimed at isolating themselves, breaking economic ties, and destroying public property, which has caused rapid price rises and led to a steep decline in the working people's living standard and to social tension.

The Supreme Soviet resolves:

1. Regret is expressed at the tragic events in Lithuania and Latvia, events which led to casualties.

2. The president is to be requested consistently to implement the measures necessary to restore order on the territory of the Baltic republics, using all the powers available to the president to ensure full and strict observance of the freedoms and rights of all USSR citizens living on those republics' territory; the labor collectives and social organizations are to be enlisted in this work, drawing on their support as an important instrument of the policy of national accord and reconciliation.

3. The USSR president is to be requested to convene the USSR Federation Council with a view to examining the question of the situation in the Baltic republics.

4. The RSFSR Supreme Soviet chairman is instructed to submit a proposal to the USSR Federation Council on the adoption of specific practical measures to protect the interests of the Russian-speaking population in the Baltic republics, and also to take steps aimed at stopping unjustified attacks on the USSR Armed Forces and USSR MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] and KGB troops, and also on RSFSR citizens serving in the said organs.

5. The Soviet of the Republic, Soviet of Nationalities, and Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and the RSFSR Government are instructed to ensure the formulation and practical implementation of measures promoting the strengthening of economic, cultural, and other mutually beneficial ties between Russia and the Lithuanian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic], the Latvian SSR, and the Estonian SSR.

6. With a view to establishing and maintaining contacts with parliamentarians, various population strata and groups, labor collectives, and public movements, delegations of RSFSR people's deputies are to be sent to the Baltic republics by mutual agreement.

7. The RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, the RSFSR Supreme Soviet chairman, and the RSFSR Council of Ministers are instructed, in the course of their activity to develop relations with the union republics, to be guided strictly by the provisions of the RSFSR Constitution, the RSFSR Declaration of State Sovereignty, and the decisions of the Second (Extraordinary) Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies on the principles for concluding the Union Treaty.

The RSFSR Supreme Soviet appeals to all RSFSR citizens to take no action that could lead to the exacerbation of interethnic conflicts or the escalation of violence either in the RSFSR or in the other union republics.

[Signed] RSFSR people's deputies

Khasbulatov on RSFSR Stance on Baltics

91UN0754A Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian No 3, 23 Jan 91 p 3

[Report on interview with Ruslan Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, by Ye. Domnysheva; place and date not given: "And Without Dictatorship"]

[Text] [Domnysheva] Ruslan Imranovich, I saw the telegram you sent to the coal miners. You say in it that you cannot object to political rallies but at the same time you ask them not to conduct lengthy strikes, because of the complex economic situation in the country and the attacks by reactionary forces on the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation. However, the Kuzbass is starting to boil again. Video reports from Vilnius have reached Siberia.

[Khasbulatov] It is always harder to undo a knot than it is to tie one. One should consider everything before taking any steps. Unfortunately, our center's approach to our economic problems has been somewhat superficial and the same can be said about politics. Our president labeled Yeltsin's statement provocative and that gives me reason to doubt whether our president has read his ideas on the Russian Army. Such evaluations of Russia's leader by the president are insulting and only serve to add to the tense situation.

Yeltsin was asked a question and he answered it. That was all. Meanwhile, leaders of the Russian Communist Party have been mentioning the need to set up self-defense groups for quite a while now. Such groups, in essence, are armed units. Is it possible that this wish of Polozkov's party was put to practice in Lithuania? What is most amazing about past events is the attitude displayed by PRAVDA, the television, and a number of officials towards the National Salvation Committee. They are showing such respect for it—for some faceless people who violated the constitution and who are calling for an overthrow of a legally elected power! These are the same people who are calling upon us to abide by the law even though the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Government has never violated any law!

[Domnysheva] The main accusation aimed at you by some circles is your alleged betrayal of the interests of the Russians in the Baltic republics...

[Khasbulatov] At the same time they never say a word about all that has already been done by the RSFSR leadership for the Russian-speaking population. Since August, since the moment the new power was formed in the RSFSR, we have been involved in drafting a treaty that would guarantee protection for the Russian-speaking people of the Baltics. We have found it difficult to agree with the Baltic representatives on several issues. But we have stood our ground. We have quoted international agreements and Vienna treaties. We have tried to help them make the Baltic laws agree with the Declaration on Human Rights. Leaders of these republics took our requirements into account. They guaranteed that they would revise some discriminatory laws and provide protection for the people and their interests.

If the Baltics enter into an economic alliance with us, we will preserve all our relationships. And we will do it without dictatorship. You have to be crazy or a prisoner of extra-centrist tendencies to object to this. The "don't you dare do anything without us!" position can lead to serious complications. Look, the moment we reached a realistic, positive result based on law—I mean the temporary economic treaty and the agreement on the budget—the center started illegalities. From the legal point of view, all the explanations given with respect to the transfer of troops to the Baltics could be simply ridiculous, were they not so tragic. Who has ever seen, in any country, that troops started to act after being ordered to by some mythical committee?

At the same time statements were issued which distorted Yeltsin's words. All that was done at the highest level. You would not hear from them that in Russia everything is being done for servicemen. But it was not the Russian Government that decided to relocate military families from Eastern Europe to the Baltic republics—into the unbearable conditions there.

[Domnysheva] What has the Russian leadership been able to do for the military during the six months of its existence?

[Khasbulatov] Since last fall we have been working on the "accommodations" program designated for military families returning from the European countries. The German Government allocated another 250 million deutsche marks for a special retraining program for officers and warrant officers. Moreover, we have great hopes that some of the servicemen would want to become farmers. We will give them anything—living quarters, money, loans, land, and bank credits.

At our meeting with Yazov and the military we stated clearly: There should be a Union Army and the opinion of the RSFSR leaders in this respect is unequivocal. But the way the Army is being used today can make the republics and the autonomies wonder how the legitimately elected power should be defended.

Belgorod Communists Hit Yeltsin's Baltic Stance

PM2201160791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 19 Jan 91 Second Edition p 2

[Report by Yu. Makhrin: "Oblast CPSU Committee Bureau Appeal"]

[Text] Belgorod Oblast CPSU Committee Bureau has adopted an appeal to the oblast's communists, working people, and entire population in connection with the events in Lithuania.

Those tragic events, it states, have caused pain and bitterness in all people and confirm once again that any deviation from the law and fueling of interethnic and separatist passions leads to unpredictable consequences. While sending our sincere condolences to the families of those who died, we, like all who value peace and concord in our home, most resolutely condemn the national-separatist policy of Lithuania's leadership and the decisions and anticonstitutional actions of the authorities, who are violating the rights of citizens, particularly those of the Russian-speaking population and servicemen. We fully support the actions of USSR President M.S. Gorbachev and the Soviet Government, who are seeking to use political methods to return the processes in that republic to a constitutional channel.

The appeal goes on to state: "It is to be regretted that the voice of B.N. Yeltsin, head of the Russian legislature, is also to be heard in the chorus of these inflammatory voices. By supporting the separatist, nationalist course of the Baltic republics' Supreme Soviets and governments, he has ignored the interests of the Russian-speaking population which lives there. Such actions run counter to Articles 11 and 14 of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Declaration of State Sovereignty. Moreover, in his interview for journalists on the events in Lithuania and the Baltic region B. Yeltsin made statements which can only be viewed as a call for the disintegration of the USSR and the Soviet Army and as a threat to the unity of the Soviet Union's peoples."

Each of us, the appeal states, must be profoundly aware that the attempts of antisocialist forces to play the "Lithuanian card" are aimed at undermining the USSR's integrity.

Text of Communist Party Statement on Lithuania

91UN0749A Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 19 Jan 91 First Edition p 2

["Statement of the RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee Politburo"—SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA]

[Text] The Communist Party of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Central Committee Politburo received with profound concern news of the tragic events in Lithuania entailing human casualties.

Communists, like all Russian people, share the grief of their fellow citizens and express profound condolences to the families of the deceased.

We are receiving a multitude of telegrams, letters, and complaints from working people and servicemen from all parts of the country angrily condemning the national separatism, extremism, and irresponsibility of the politicians which brought about the irreparable misfortunes. In this situation the RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee Politburo deems it necessary to declare that:

The main blame for the tragic development of events lies with the politicians who, having come to be in office, are dividing their citizens along national and religious lines and putting them in an unequal position from the standpoint of fundamental human rights and liberties.

The incompetent actions of the Lithuanian leadership, which has adopted a number of measures causing a deterioration in the material position of the working people, have led to sharp confrontation and a social explosion which has split society into opposite parts. Such is the main cause of the tragic events.

Having betrayed the process of restructuring in respect of a renewal of socialism, the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet and Government have deceived their electorate, attempted to revive bourgeois practices, and have in practice brought the republic to economic and political collapse. Such a policy is criminal.

Unfortunately, people calling themselves "democrats" are today declaring their solidarity with the Lithuanian leadership. They are employing for the umpteenth time a dual moral standard in an evaluation of political events. What is the value of the appeal of four republics to the United Nations concerning a solution of our problems by the hands of others.

The communists condemn the position of the leadership of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, which behind the backs of the people's deputies has essentially entered into a compact with the forces leading the Baltic republics to a division of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and an actual linkup with neofascist forces. Not considering it necessary to meet with the Russian-speaking population, and defending Landsbergis' position, B.N. Yeltsin is defending himself.

The actions of B.N. Yeltsin, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, in recent days and his irresponsible and inflammatory statements and demands for the creation of armed forces in the republic indicate that he has lost his sense of political responsibility for the fate of the republics and the USSR. B.N. Yeltsin and his sympathizers are consistently pursuing a policy aimed at confrontation with the leadership of the USSR and disregard for the USSR Constitution and Union legislation, contributing to the spurring of political and social tension in the country and heading in the direction of the actual collapse of the Union. Such actions cannot win the support of Russia's communists.

The RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee Politburo appeals to the communists and all citizens of the republic to emphatically condemn national separatism, extremism, and the policy of confrontation; and to contribute to the restoration of civic harmony and the peace and solidarity of all peoples of our country and demand unswerving compliance with constitutional provisions and Union laws.

We appeal to all honest citizens of the USSR to cast aside what disunites us and come together at this difficult time for the country and contribute to the strengthening of the fatherland in the name of the unity and friendship of all peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

[Signed] Communist Party of the RSFSR Central Committee Politburo

Alksnis Deplores Russian Legislature Behavior

PM2401170291 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 24 Jan 91 First Edition p 3

[Interview with USSR People's Deputy V.I. Alksnis by correspondent V. Litvin; place and date of interview not stated: "V.I. Alksnis: How I Tried To Address the Russian Legislature; 'Get Out of the Hall!'"]

[Text] The name of USSR People's Deputy V.I. Alksnis is well known to our readers. On the opening day of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet session he was in the hall of sessions, and even managed to speak. Viktor Imantovich shared his impressions of the session's progress and the atmosphere there with our correspondent V. Litvin.

[Litvin] I watched the television coverage of the first day of the session, and I saw how difficult it was for you to reach the microphone...

[Alksnis] Difficult is not the word. I have heard far fewer oaths, threats, and insults in two years of political activity than in the few hours I spent in the Russian legislature hall of sessions. When I approached the microphone to "stake out" my presence, one RSFSR people's deputy thrust his way up to me and said, in so many words: "Get out of the hall, you provocateur! There's no place for you here!" The deputy backed up his threats with physical pressure, trying to shove me in the chest. "Jerk! Creep! Scum!"—the cries came from all sides. I have never seen such a quantity of frenzied faces disfigured with furious malice. And although I have long since gotten used to calumny and persecution, I can honestly say I felt really uncomfortable. I never expected to see such a ferocious scowl on the face of our "radical democracy," least of all in Russia, which we always saw as a model of human tolerance and respect for other nations and people. I am ashamed for the honest, decent people who, I am sure, make up a majority of Russia's deputies. Surely they must realize that such behavior by an aggressive minority, which is sometimes reminiscent, if you'll excuse my bluntness, of street hooligans, compromises the parliament of great Russia, on which our Union depended and will depend. I would not be surprised if the Russian legislature's popularity rating, and particularly that of its leaders, takes a sudden dive...

[Litvin] You said its leaders, but they are apparently trying to curb the passions. You can see that on television.

[Alksnis] The whole point is that you are judging by the television screen, where you can't see everything, and some things are actually cut. It is absolutely essential to be in the hall. When I came up to the microphone opposite B.N. Yeltsin, he pretended not to notice me for a long time. But I stood firm and, by waiting until the noise and the torrent of threats died down, I succeeded eventually in making Boris Nikolayevich switch on the microphone, remarking reluctantly as he did so that he was obliged to grant the floor to a USSR people's deputy. And that is how I managed to "grab" a rejoinder in reply to the vile insult against me. As for my three-minute speech, it took incredible efforts to achieve that. Judge for yourself. I submitted my request much earlier than other USSR people's deputies and received B.N. Yeltsin's assurance that I would be allowed to speak. However, they willingly allowed "democratic" USSR People's Deputies Yu. Afanasyev, V. Samarin, and others to speak. Yet I was not on the list of speakers at all... I had to "occupy" the microphone again.

R. Khasbulatov, surrendering to my persistence, eventually gave the floor to me, and then to my opponent, and even that was after a heated exchange, when it was frankly difficult to refuse. Yet you would think they could show elementary courtesy to guests... After all, I was speaking as official representative of the "Equal Rights" faction in the Latvian legislature, which defends the interests of the nonindigenous—mainly Russian-speaking—population. You will agree that when questions relating to their situation in the Baltic republics are being discussed, it is simply essential to listen to delegates from the Russian-speaking population. But the Russian legislative leadership makes no secret of where its sympathies lie. Thus two of our republic's deputies from the Russian-speaking population—Ye. Drobot and V. Yagupets—were not allowed into the hall, while deputies from the majority faction, which is pursuing a discriminatory, anti-Russian policy, were escorted ceremoniously into the hall by secretariat officials. So was that People's Front protege, Latvian Internal Affairs Minister A. Vaznis. The very man who handed out 650 submachine guns and ammunition to People's Front militants who make no secret of their intention to use them against the so-called "Russian occupying forces." I can't make any sense of it.

Russia has always helped those who are downtrodden, injured, persecuted. But now it is helping those who flout elementary rights and openly insult the Russian-speaking population, officially declaring them to be "second-class" people. Incidentally, a female correspondent for the newspaper ATMODA, who has a permanent pass to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet hall of sessions, came up to me after my speech and let loose some "unfeminine" abuse in which the word "scum" was the least indecent. The standard of civilized and cultured behavior among the Baltic and Russian "democrats" and their methods and tactics are strikingly similar. True, ours are slightly more restrained, but then they are more businesslike. They prefer, especially in recent times, to settle things physically and, as they put it, "for keeps."

[Litvin] What do you mean?

[Alksnis] One Latvian "democratic" organization has openly sentenced me to death. Even the date has been set for the sentence to be carried out—by 31 January. The Sajudis militants, it has been reported, have also passed the death sentence on the well-known television journalist A. Nevzorov. Well, it is a great honor for me to be in his company as a target of the neofascist democracy, as Nevzorov himself so aptly put it. Soon Russia's pseudodemocrats, who are actually bourgeois conservatives and extremists, will start talking with their political opponents in exactly the same way. The Baltic is a few months ahead of Russia in the development of events. The campaigners against "totalitarianism" and the "partocracy" are acting very skillfully and effectively when they beat up, insult, or shoot the women or children of "conservatives" and "Stalinists." Accompanied by a thunderous cannonade from the "democratic" mass media about the defense of "sovereignty" and "freedom."

Russian Property Exchange Created

PM2401150191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Jan 91 Union Edition p 1

[POSTFAKTUM report: "Property Exchange Created in Moscow"]

[Text] An all-Russian property exchange has been created whose main aims are the creation of a property market in the USSR and organization and assistance in the creation and operation of brokerage offices for property operations, POSTFAKTUM reports.

The founders of the exchange are the all-Russian exchange center, the Russian information bank, the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] technical stock-taking administration, and a number of other commercial organizations. The all-Russian property exchange is an open joint-stock company with an incorporation capital of 100 million rubles broken down into shares costing 250,000 rubles each. At the inaugural meeting it was decided to hold an open registration for the exchange's shares. The organizational committee's telephone number is 268-75-33.

Deputy, TV Official Discuss All-Russia Channel

LD2101231391

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 1630 GMT on 19 January broadcasts a 14-minute discussion between Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] People's Deputy I.V. Zbronzhko and O.M. Poptsev, chairman of the Board of the All-Russian State Television and Radio Company. The discussion begins with Zbronzhko saying:

"Democracy, as everyone knows, begins with freedom of expresion, and it was precisely for this reason that as far back as the First Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies, Russia asserted its sovereignty and endorsed this with a decision to set up its own mass media, among them an all-Russian state television and radio service. "More than six months have passed, but alas Russia still does not have a full-blooded television service. So I ask you, Oleg Maksimovich, as chairman of the Board of the All-Russian Television and Radio Company, what is going on where our television is concerned? What is the holdup? For undoubtedly this same question is being asked by many Russian television viewers."

Poptsov replies: "Yes, this is a question that is nagging me too, because wherever one goes one is surrounded by people who all want to know about Russian television. In general terms, this is a dramatic and long drawn-out matter. We are embroiled in very sticky talks with USSR Gosteleradio. I should say frankly at once that that we do not sense any feeling of friendliness in USSR Gosteleradio's attitude to us. Since the congress made its decision there was been a change of head of Gosteleradio. At the beginning we were talking with Nenashev; now those talks are with Comrade Kravchenko. What I would call the third round of talks took place on the 5th [as heard] and I had the feeling it was quite favorable, because a certain amount of sense had come into the talks on the part of the other side.

"The chief question concerns ownership of the channel—the second channel—that was a decision of the congress and a decision of the government. Everyone understands that that is how it has to be, and at talks which Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin conducted with the president, the president confirmed that he was in agreement—three times. That sowed a certain optimism, and it is therefore all the more stranger that each time we have sat down to talk to them since, the chairman of the State Committee, Leonid Petrovich [Kravchenko], has said: 'But where are the papers, where is it written down, all this about the second channel? It isn't, so there you have it. In other words, no.' The president told you one thing, and he told me something else. I do not want to make judgements about when the president was speaking the truth and when he was not, because Leonid Petrovich himself says that the president did not say anything. But there is one thing we can say: The question remains open. It must be said that our position allows for great concessions. We not only say that the right to plan and organize the work of the second channel should fall to Russia, but we are ready to take on ourselves all the obligations which Gosteleradio bears toward viewers of the second program. We are ready; there is no question about that."

Poptsev goes on to say: "But what rumors there are that at the last session even the president asked whether it is necessary to think about the need for a Russian channel. Well, I think this is more than just rumor. It is more than just rumor if while we are holding talks the chairman of USSR Gosteleradio gives an interview during a break in the meeting."

Poptsov notes that Kravchenko said: "Russia broadcasts from our facilities and on our frequencies and we could close down that radio any time we choose. Do you realize what that means? It means: We might close it down. Then Deputy Filshin comes up and asks: 'Is that serious?' Then Leonid Petrovich [Kravchenko] corrects himself. I'm talking about the possibility.'"

"So," Poptsev continues," our talks are nothing more than a cynical exercise, because at the same time as the talks are going on the opposite thing is effectively being said. And then following the talks...[changes thought] The talks were held on the 5th, and they were attended, on behalf of the party Central Committee sector which deals with radio and television matters, by Aygar Misan, and then this is what the newspaper KOMMERSANT had to say on the 7th: 'For his party Aygar Misan expressed the opinion that there is hardly any point in "Vzglyad" calling for any softening of position by Leonid Kravchenko, who was appointed especially by the president to conduct a hardline policy, and that it would be better to refrain from going on the air until approximately 20 January—I shall come back to that date, Popotsov interjects—According to his information, by that date historic decisions will have been taken by the president concerning television and radio broadcasting, after which things will be easier.'" Poptsov adds: "The last phrase is in quotation marks: 'True, in his opinion, the dividing-up of broadcasting into a presidential and a Russian channel, which the staff of Central Television has been expecting, will not come about.'"

Zbronzhko asks: "So what is this reference to 20 January? Is that D-day?"

Poptsov replies: "Yes, that is D-day. On 20 January the president is to sign a decree concerning radio and television."

Poptsov then recounts how he challenged Misan, who claimed he had been misquoted. At a conference of a small group of people held at Gosteleradio, when even so the question of how much airtime to give to Russia was under discussion, Comrade Misan again said, according to Poptsov: "What are you worried about? On 20 January the president will issue a historic decree, then everything will be put in its place, everyone wil get their desserts, and Russia can get on with it."

Poptsov emphasizes the need for good programs like "Vzglyad" and "Night News," and about the law on press freedom having been one of the real plusses of perestroyka. He concludes by emphasizing again the need for Russia, as a guarantor of the preservation of the Union, to have its own radio and television.

Ryazan City Soviet Reforms Local Government

PM2301133191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Jan 91 Union Edition p 5

[Report by correspondent A. Pushkar: "Ryazan Municipality"]

[Text] A Ryazan City Soviet session has decided to abolish the gorispolkom [city soviet executive committee] and combine the posts of chairman of the soviet and the executive organ.

City Soviet Chairman V. Ryumin said that the new structure has been thoroughly worked through for four months. Foreign experience, in particular in the German city of Muenster with which Ryazan maintains friendly ties, has been taken into consideration. Director managers have been appointed in the main areas of municipal life: public health, culture, education, construction and repair, housing and utilities, power generation, transport, and communications. A socioeconomic administration has been set up to coordinate their activity. The city soviet presidium has been enlarged to 25 people and also includes rayon soviet chairmen. The functions performed by deputies' commissions have been broadened. They themselves will prepare decisions on many questions and these will come into force after being signed by the city soviet chairman. Only the most important problems will be resolved by the presidium. The purpose of the organizational restructuring is to increase executive power; it will help conduct business more efficiently. It is known that a similar reorganization is taking place in other Russian cities.

It must be noted that the Ryazan City Soviet and its chairman, Ryumin, are working under targeted fire from PRIOKSKAYA PRAVDA, the Ryazan CPSU Obkom [oblast committee] and Oblast Soviet newspaper edited by L. Kryuchkov. Obviously reflecting the irritation felt by the party bureaucracy which went bankrupt during the elections, last year the newspaper carried dozens of articles discrediting the legally elected democratic Soviet. However it never mentioned a word about its good works. The current changes in the city soviet are not to the newspaper's taste, either.

Sakhalin Citizens Protest Threat to Security

PM2301092991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Jan 91 First Edition p 6

[Report by Lieutenant V. Usoltsev under "Direct Line" rubric: "People of Sakhalin—For the Border Zone"]

[Text] Sakhalin, 15 Jan—The democratization of our society has also raised questions of safeguarding the USSR's state border. For example, many far eastern cities have become "open" for visits, including by foreigners. Among these cities are Vladivostok and Sovetskaya Gavan. This has affected the island of Sakhalin also, primarily in connection with the creation of so-called free enterprise zones.

And given that measures of this kind have hitherto met with approval and support by local residents, the reaction to the corresponding decision of the USSR Council of Ministers and the oblast soviet was perhaps unexpected for many. Buses and cars appeared on the streets of the oblast with stickers saying "People of Sakhalin, Let Us Defend the Border Zone!" stuck to the windshields.

Thousands of protest letters have already been received at the editorial offices of the local newspapers. Moreover, in a number of the island's population centers, the local press reports, stormy rallies protesting the authorities' decision have been held.

The mood on Sakhalin is no accident. After all, the islanders know that with the "opening" of a number of maritime cities crime and other negative social phenomena have increased there.

Siberian Business Journal Published

LD1301090291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0500 GMT 13 Jan 91

[Text] The first edition of the Russian-language commercial weekly DELOVAYA SIBIR [Business Siberia] has appeared in the Soyuzpechat kiosks of Siberian towns. The new independent publishing house is first and foremost intended for our own businessmen, managers and merchants. Its publishers intend to concisely and objectively reflect the processes taking place in the economic life of Siberia.

Welcoming the appearance of the first edition, Silayev, chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Council of Ministers, noted that for many years the Urals, Siberia, and the Far East have, for them most part, been viewed as a storehouse of resources. The implications of such a one-sided view became clear when the miners of the Kuzbass, and the Tyumen oilmen—the native people of the north—loudly proclaimed their problems. To turn today's raw material appendages into economically developed regions is an extremely complex task, and all of us will have to work a great deal and with determination to achieve this.

New Russian Magazine on Police Work Issued

LD1801180991 Moscow TASS in English 1702 GMT 18 Jan 91

[Text] Moscow January 18 TASS—The Russian Federation Press and Mass Media Ministry has registerd a new magazine, INTERPOL-MOSKVA.

The new publication's volume will amount to 24 printer's sheets and its circulation will depend on paper supplies. At first the magazine's circulation will be some 200,000, and it will be possible to buy it only in kiosks.

Professor Anatoliy Bezuglov, magazine editor-in-chief, said the name of the magazine should not limit topics covered by it. INTERPOL-MOSKVA will elucidate the work of police and other law-enforcement bodies in Interpol member-countries, but it will focus on the activities of criminal police.

The first issue is expected to be published in February. It will carry all kinds of detective stories, including about James Bond and by the editor-in-chief himself.

Western Republics

Belorussian Deputies Criticize Banknote Exchange

LD2401175991 Minsk Domestic Service in Russian 0515 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Summary] At the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet session, Supreme Soviet Chairman Dementey suggested the setting up at rayon Executive Committees of commissions on citizens' applications concerning the exchange of money. Belorussian Minister of Finance Yanchuk explained the reason for the president's monetary decree. Nonetheless, some deputies spoke quite negatively of the decree. They expressed concern about the condition of retired people, invalids, and old people who keep all their savings for "a rainy day" in R50 and R100 notes. According to Deputy Yaugen Glushkevich, "this action will hurt our least protected groups of people." He said that he would like the center not to forget that Belorussia is a sovereign republic which passed its own law on the national bank, and the fact that all this is ignored is alarming.

Deputy Leonid Ivanovich Zdeyko reminded the session that "that very shadow economy, all these corrupted structures long ago invested their money into mansions, summer cottages, cars, gold, and crystal. They made sure this gold became two to three times more expensive and they can fearlessly march forward." Deputy Zablovskiy accused his own Supreme Soviet of forgetting about its sovereignty and of its financial independence, and he also appeared to be quite skeptical about the deadline for exchange. He said that the population of his electoral district is 60,000, but the post office takes approximately 5 minutes to serve each person.

But Tishkevich, chairman of the Minsk Oblast Executive Committee, said that the president's decree assists the normalization of the country's economic situation and every deputy's task is to do his best to implement the decree, trying not to hurt the poor.

Dnestr Deputies Discuss Gorbachev Decree

LD2201100891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1710 GMT 21 Jan 91

[By TASS correspondent Fedor Angeli]

[Text] Tiraspol (Moldova), 21 Jan (TASS)—An emergency Congress of People's Deputies of all levels of the Dnestr Republic, which was declared anticonstitutional by the Moldovan Supreme Soviet and annulled by a decree of the USSR president, has been held. It examined current issues in light of the "decree of the USSR president on measures to normalize the situation in the Moldovan SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic].

The decision adopted stresses that the implementation of the demands contained in the decree could ensure the creation of real guarantees of observance of the constitutional rights of citizens of all nationalities residing in the republic. However, the decisions on implementing the demands of the decree adopted at the end of December 1990 by the Moldovan legislature demonstrate that the Supreme Soviet of the Moldovan SSR is not renouncing its discriminatory and separatist policy. The official authorities continue to adopt numerous legislative acts infringing the rights of the non-Moldovan section of the population. They are creating a legal state mechanism for persecuting and suppressing dissenters and are continuing to carry out the policy of Romanianizing the Moldovan people.

The general primary of republican laws over USSR laws is reaffirmed. The parliament has conferred state sovereignty on itself without the consent of the people and without holding the necessary referendum. It systematically rejects proposals on restoring the powers of the 12 deputies from the Dnestr region and areas densely populated by the Gagauz who were unlawfully deprived of their powers as deputies.

In this connection the deputies of the Dnestr region dismissed the article in the decree which deprives the Dnestr Republic of any form of legal status. The resolution adopted at the congress emphasizes that the Dnestr Republic is an independent state formation and it has a full and indivisible right to be a subject of the USSR Federation and to sign the Union treaty. It notes that the congress considers the only possible way of preserving the unity of Moldova is by the unification of the Moldovan SSR, the Gagauz Republic, and the Dnestr region of the Moldovan SSR on a federal basis. The congress has appealed to the USSR Supreme Soviet to legally recognize the Dnestr region of the Moldovan SSR.

The congress also adopted an appeal to the Armed Forces of the USSR. In particular, it states: "We support the USSR draft law 'on general military service and duty'. We are disturbed by the attempts of some state figures to distance the army from actions defending law and order in our country...the latest events in Lithuania have shown that a clash has taken place as a result of deliberately planned provocation, which has been implemented by nationalist and anti-Soviet forces in this republic. We remember and greatly value the fact that only the readiness of the Army to defend the people led to civil war being averted in Moldova in October and November 1990 when illegal militarized groups of volunteers led directly by Mirca Druk, the republic's prime minister, and by Ion Kostash, the internal affairs minister, organised a shameful attack on territory densely populated with the Gagauz and Dnestr peoples."

Moldovan Communists Hit Extremism, Anticommunism

PM2401100991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 21 Jan 91 First Edition p 2

[TASS report: "Moldova Communist Party Central Committee Plenum"]

[Text] Kishinev, 20 Jan—The Moldova Communist Party draft statutes and a number of other documents were examined at a Moldova Communist Party Central Committee plenum yesterday.

The sitting stressed that the sociopolitical atmosphere in the republic is continuing to deteriorate and the economy is experiencing a profound crisis. Executive power at all levels is in a state of crisis.

Forces committed to the old methods of diktat have thrown off their masks. The right wing of the Moldovan People's Front is particularly prominent in this respect: It is seeking to impose on society its decisions on the fundamental issues and to speak on behalf of all the Moldovan people. Political extremism and anticommunist ideas now dominate its leaders' views. In a number of regions of the republic there are even open calls for reprisals against communists.

The Moldova Communist Party's aim, the adopted documents stress, is to protect the interests and constitutional rights of workers, peasants, and the working intelligentsia. Communists resolutely condemn the hounding and persecution of people for their ideological convictions and advocate the priority of human rights regardless of nationality.

The plenum was addressed by P.K. Luchinskiy, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and first secretary of the Moldova Communist Party Central Committee.

Crimean Oblast Discusses Referendum Results

LD2401212991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1630 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The results of the referendum held last Sunday on the state and legal status of the Crimea were discussed today at the session of the oblast soviet of people's deputies in Simferopol.

It was stressed that the question of the re-creation of the autonomous republic, which was abolished in 1945 after the deportation of the Crimean Tartars and other repressed peoples, is being resolved consistently and on a legal basis. Most Crimeans, who voted in favor of restoring the autonomy at the referendum, have expressed their support for this course.

Based on the results of the vote, the oblast soviet has proposed to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet that it introduce changes in the Constitution of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic enshrining the will of the Crimea's population, and requested that it make representations to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies concerning the introduction of the corresponding amendments and addenda to the country's Constitution.

In the course of the referendum the Crimeans have already expressed their attitude to the Union treaty, having spoken for participation in it, the session noted. That is why it would be expedient to also recognize this as the result of the vote in the all-Union referendum scheduled for 17 March. The oblast soviet has decided to address a proposal to that effect to the parliaments of the country and the Ukraine.

Ukrainian Supreme Soviet To Meet 1 Feb

LD2201151491 Kiev International Service in Ukrainian 2200 GMT 18 Jan 91

[Summary] The latest session of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Presidium discussed the agenda and organizational matters of the third session of the repubic's legislature. It was noted that in the course of five months the legislature will have to solve a considerable number of questions set a side by the previous session. The session will open on 1 February 1991.

Native Soldiers Reject Service Outside Republic

PM2201100591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 19 Jan 91 Union Edition p 2

[Report by correspondent S. Tsikora: "They Want to Serve in Their Own Republic"]

[Text] Kiev—The unplanned appearance of soldiers who have left their units was a surprise at the news conference in the premises of the Ukrainian Writers Union.

One of the soldiers read out a statement addressed to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet chairman and the republic's head of government. All 10 signatories of this statement are draftee servicemen from military units 43645 and 32500.

The conflict occurred on 15 January 1991. On that day, the soldiers say, without warning and contrary to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet resolution on compulsory service on the republic's territory, they were put in a train and taken to Baku. Talks with the units' command led nowhere. Then the 10 soldiers got out of the train.

In an appeal addressed to the republic's leadership, the soldiers ask to be protected and that it "allow no more Ukrainian servicemen to be sent to other republics where we could be used against the local population." We are prepared, the statement continues, "to continue military service immediately on the territory of our motherland—the Ukraine—aware that that is our civic duty." "We live by the laws of the Ukraine and we demand their observance not only by the civilian population but also by the leadership of the military units."

Kravchuk Promises Donbass Miners Protection

PM2501113491 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 91 p 2

[Report by correspondent V. Kosyak: "How Will the Miners Reply?"]

[Text] I remember how at the latest miners' congress M. Shchadov, Union minister of the coal industry, bought off the auditorium underhandedly: "Support us, the sector will have work, and there will be no redundancies." And he promised the coal miners billions of "their own." Hearing about the subsidy, everybody calmed down at once.

Now here is a new sensation: L. Kravchuk, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet chairman, arrived in the Donbass with special powers. At his first meeting at the mine named for the 60th Anniversary of the Soviet Ukraine he immediately took the bull by the horns: "We have decided to take the miners and metallurgists under our wing; the Supreme Soviet reserves the right not to transfer the sum these sectors need to the Union budget, and to fund the Donbass directly." L. Kravchuk repeated his idea during a visit to the Donetsk Metallurgical Plant.

There are grounds to suppose that Kravchuk's tour of the Donbass will bring considerable political dividends. A referendum on the attitude to the Union lies ahead. It is more than clear that what lies behind the vague form of words in the question put to the referendum is the center's desire to maintain its position without giving any guarantees to the republics. L. Kravchuk expressed alarm on this matter: "We are against the kind of Union in which one person in Moscow can cancel out a decision of the whole republic legislature."

Kharkov Oblast Soviet Chairman Resigns

LD2501073791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0500 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Text] Our correspondent reports from Kharkov that Titov, the chairman of the oblast soviet and a doctor of physics and mathematics, who had been elected last year on the alternative basis, resigned.

He explained his decision by saying that the social and economic situation in the oblast grew worse in the course of this year and all his efforts to stabilize the situation were not successful. Well, I do not think it is difficult to reproach a person who gives up in the present situation.

Rukh Chairman Comments on Ukrainian Independence

LD2201170491 Kiev International Service in Ukrainian 2200 GMT 18 Jan 91

[Interview with Ivan Drach, chairman of the Ukrainian Peoples Movement for Perestroyka (Rukh), by unidentified announcer—live]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] On 22 January 1919, the unification of the Ukrainian People's Republic and West Ukrainian People's Republic into a single state was declared in Kiev. [passage omitted] Last year the celebration of that event turned into a live chain from Kiev to Lvov, with five million people taking part. This year, Rukh [Ukrainian People's Movement for Perestroyka] has also drawn a plan of many measures to commemorate the anniversary, some of which Radio Kiev will cover in due course. But before that we have asked Ivan Drach, Ukraine people's deputy and chairman of Rukh, to be our guest.

[Drach] Today I see this holiday in a different light. Today I regard it as the Day of Sobornost—a day of the Ukraine's independence. It is the anniversary of a real declaration of a sovereign and independent Ukraine. However, Bolshevist Russia led by Lenin then pursued a Jesuit policy, and our independence—all of it—was destroyed. [passage omitted]

We need this anniversary, for it is already evident that as soon as some state rises from its knees, whether it is Lithuania or Georgia, various problems arise. For example, in Lithuania a Polish problem rises its head, a problem which never existed before; in Georgia—an Abkhazian or Ossetian problem. In Moldova there suddenly cropped up a Gagauzian problem. In Ukraine, maybe not to such an extent, problems also occur; for example the Crimea or Novorussia or the Krivoy Rog-Donets republic. And all this occurs because Ukraine has not as yet realized itself fully as a sovereign state as is the case with Lithuania or Georgia. Had Ukraine risen to the same high mark, you would see yourself how quickly the flywheels would be switched on for creating these Krivoy Rog-Donets and Crimean republics and Novorussia. [passage omitted]

[Announcer] Ivan Fedorovych, why in your view is this holiday not supported by our official organs of power?

[Drach] With time, things will come to this and they will support the Day of Sobornost. What else? How can we celebrate the unification of 1939, of that terrible year? The fact that the unification of Ukraine took place in that year can—as I have already stated repeatedly—be termed as unification within the jaws of a crocodile. Don't forget that that unification was accompanied by a horrible bloody mission; for in Galicia alone up to 1.5 million people were killed, exiled, or resettled. With such knowledge, how can we celebrate that so-called Golden September? [passage omitted]

For us the unification of 1919 is the only genuine unification. [passage omitted]

Ukraine Obkom Press Center Set on Fire

PM2301093591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 21 Jan 91 Second Edition p 3

[Report by N. Mironov: "Nocturnal Conflagration"]

[Text] Dnepropetrovsk, 20 Jan—The Ukrainian Communist Party Oblast Committee [obkom] press center has reported that during the night of 19-20 January some unidentified people set fire to the back doors of the party obkom building and the oblast and city soviet executive committee canteen. Fire fighters put out the fire and the material damage was insignificant. Criminal proceedings have been instituted as a result. When I asked "Where was the security guard?" I was told that there hasn't been any guard for some time now due to "budgetary restraints."

Deputy Khmara's Case Investigation Concluded

PM2301151391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 18 Jan 91 First Edition p 4

[Report by Lieutenant B. Bilan under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Investigation into the S. Khmara Affair Completed"]

[Text] Kiev, 17 Jan—The investigation into the case of Ukrainian People's Deputy S. Khmara that had been continuing for more than two months has concluded. The suspect and his lawyers will familiarize themselves with it before it is examined in court. At a press conference organized by "Rukh," lawyer Yu. Ayvazyan stated that, among other charges, S. Khmara has been charged with: Exceeding his authority or the plenipotentiary powers of his office, robbery, and active participation in group actions in breach of public order.

In conversation with me, Ye. Kharchenko, chief of the Kiev City Prosecutor's Office Investigations Unit, stressed that constant pressure had been brought to bear on the investigation by groups set up in support of S. Khmara, individual deputies, and sections of the media. However, dozens of witnesses and thousands of meters of videotape convincingly corroborate the lawbreaking actions perpetrated by the people's deputy. It is typical that S. Khmara, in participating in an act of violence against Militia Colonel I. Grigoryev, consorted with people investigated earlier who will also appear in court.

Caucasus

Shooting Continues in Georgia's Tskhinvali

LD2401194891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1921 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By unidentified SAKINFORM-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Tbilisi, 24 Jan (SAKINFORM-TASS)—The situation remains tense in Tskhinvali and the Dzhava Rayon of Georgia where the state of emergency declared by the Supreme Soviet of the republic is still being maintained.

Last night Georgian militia posts were fired at by automatic weapons from the direction of the state theater. Shots were heard all night in the town's streets. Previously, the situation was becoming sharply aggravated only after dusk, but today the shooting in town went on throughout the day.

Cease-Fire Reached

LD2501114391 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0430 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Text] An additional batch of Georgian military are scheduled to be withdrawan from South Ossetia today. An agreement to cease fire was achieved yesterday during a meeting of the republic's internal affairs minister with representatives of the Ossetian public in Tskhinvali.

Minister Says Monetary Decree Hurts Sovereignty

PM2401152191 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 24 Jan 91 p 1

[Interview with Georgian Minister of Finance G. Apsandze by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[Text] "Soviet money is one of the few threads still linking us to the center. For example, the 9.5 billion rubles recorded in republic citizens' savings account books are in fact controlled not by them but by central financial organs in Moscow. And in these conditions we have to obey the president's recent decree, although it is clear to everybody that such hasty reforms of the monetary system once again undermine our efforts along the path toward Georgia's state sovereignty."

Armenia Extends Deadline on Exchanging Banknotes

LD2401190191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The government of Armenia has decided to extend the deadline for exchanging old banknotes to 27 January. However, our correspondent says, even with the extension it is unlikely that the work will be completed on time. Communications have been completely paralyzed because of heavy snowfalls in the north of the republic.

Premier Criticizes Currency Law

NC2501114091 Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1630 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] A joint meeting of the Armenian Republic's Supreme Soviet Presidium and the Council of Ministers Presidium took place under Vazgen Manukyan, chairman of the Armenian Republic's Council of Ministers, which was devoted to the USSR president's decree stipulating the exchange of the 50- and 100-ruble banknotes printed since 1961.

The chairman of the government expressed concern at the fact that this measure, taken without any prior consultation with the republics, may deal a substantial blow to an economy already in a state of crisis, impede the implementation of the economic plans, and cause further social tension.

However, it was stressed unequivocally that all possible measures should be taken for the timely exchange of all 50- and 100-ruble banknotes in the possession of enterprises and citizens.

A joint commission of the Supreme Soviet and Council of Ministers was set up to tackle problems related with the implementation of this decree and to monitor the overall situation in the Soviet Union.

During a televised press conference, Vazgen Manukyan was asked whether this decision has anything positive to offer our people. The prime minister replied: I do not think so, except that it might enable our compatriots in Artsakh [Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast] to breathe freely for a few days, as the Azerbaijanis will be preoccupied with montetary matters.

[Yerevan Domestic Service in Armenian at 0600 GMT on 25 January in its "from the review of HAYASTANI HANRAPETUTYUN" program reports that the joint commission monitoring the exchange of banknotes met at the Armenian Council of Ministers on 24 January under Vazgen Manukyan. Grant Bagratyan, first deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers and chairman of the State Committee for Economy, and Usik Arutyunyan, chairman of the Committee for State Security, "provided information about the way the USSR president's decree was being implemented in other Union republics. It was noted that a number of republics have decided to extend the deadline for the implementation of the decree, and certain republics have determined an amount of money that may be exchanged without any explanatory documents being filed."]

Armenian Presidium Issues Statement on NKAO

NC2001093691 Yerevan Domestic Service in Armenian 0400 GMT 19 Jan 91

[Statement issued by the Armenian Supreme Soviet Presidium]

[Text] Taking advantage of the current situation when international public opinion and the attention of the people inhabiting the Soviet Union are focused on the Persian Gulf, which has become the theater for military operations, and on the Baltic republics and in particular the (?grave) developments in Lithuania, the Azerbaijani authorities are aggravating the already explosive situation in Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast [NKAO], Shaumyanovskiy Rayon, and Getashen subrayon.

There is no end to the cables and messages sent by our compatriots in Artsakh [in NKAO] to the chairman of the Armenian Republic's Supreme Soviet, the president of the USSR, the USSR Supreme Soviet, and the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The cables are being received from Babayan, chairman of the executive committee of the NKAO Soviet, and the chairmen of the executive committees of Stepanakert city, Gatrutskiy, Askeranskiy, Mardakertskiy, Martuninskiy, and Shaumyanovskiy Rayons. The cables are also arriving from the collectives of enterprises, citizens, and Yerevan's [name indistinct] factory and color printing house, Malatya hospital, and from other work collectives. The cables recount incidents involving setting fire to houses, firing upon vehicles, animal theft, and resultant injuries.

The Armenian Republic's Supreme Soviet fully shares the concern of the Armenian population of NKAO and condemns the central authorities' indecisiveness and procrastination as regards this problem. All the necessary steps are being taken to speedily restore the legal organs of authority in the oblast and remove Azerbaijan's special detachment militia from NKAO. This, in the opinion of the Armenian authorities, is the only way to bring about some normalization of the situation. The Armenian Supreme Soviet has already issued a relevant statement in this regard.

Armenian Deputy Blames Azerbaijan for Tension

NC2201211991 Yerevan Domestic Service in Armenian 0400 GMT 22 Jan 91

[Text] The social, political, and operative situation in Artsakh [Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast—NKAO] is becoming more acute with each passing day. ARMENPRES asked Serzhik Sargsyan, a people's deputy from the NKAO in the Armenian Supreme Soviet, to comment on the reasons for the exacerbation of the situation there.

Sargsyan said: I think that the present Azerbaijani leadership's hatred for the Armenians is the source of everything taking place there. Judge for yourselves: A year has passed since the representatives of the so-called Republican Organizational Committee settled down in Stepanakert with the help of the military. Since then the stooges of Baku have been thinking hard about how to make life unbearable for the Armenians in the region. Political and military pressure is being applied on the Armenians in the NKAO. The sharp increase in the thefts of animals, terrorism, murders, and attacks on the servicemen coincides with the appearance of the fully armed Azerbaijani special purpose militia detachment in the NKAO. The number of people killed by the servicemen has increased.

However, since the departure of the not unfamiliar Major General Safonov from the NKAO, there has been a steady tendency toward mutual understanding between the servicemen and local Armenians. Apparently, such a tendency on the eve of the possible debate of the NKAO problem at the USSR Supreme Soviet is not favorable to the Azerbaijani bandits.

Armenian Legislature Adopts Bill on Agriculture

NC2401112591 Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1630 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Text] The Armenian Republic's Supreme Soviet concluded the debate on the bill on agriculture and agricultural holdings during its morning session on 22 January after which it adopted yet another fundamental document which introduces new relations in one of the most important sectors of the republic's economy.

Supreme Soviet Deputy Chairman Gagik Arutyunyan, who presided over the session, congratulated the people's deputies on the occasion of the adoption of the bill and described it as an important document from the point of view of principle.

The parliament then started to debate the bill on land (?resources) in Armenia. The deliberations are continuing.

Central Asia

'Brief Existence' of Nuclear Test Site Reported

PM2401152591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Jan 91 Union Edition p 2

[Report by correspondent Oleg Stefashin under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Unknown Nuclear Test Site"]

[Text] Shevchenko—A special commission of Mangistau Oblast Soviet Executive Committee has made a sensational announcement confirming the brief existence of yet another nuclear test site in the republic. As one might expect, this had a bombshell effect in Kazakhstan. The population is alarmed and wants to know who decided to turn Mangyshlak into a dangerous nulcear-weapons testing zone which destroys all living things, and why. What secret experiments were carried out there and what might the ultimate consequences be? Unfortunately, official circles have so far remained absolutely silent.

It has been ascertained that secret operations to create a nulcear test site were actually carried out in the late sixties in the Ustyurt plateau, which is only 230 km from the city of Shevchenko. However, following three explosions at the depth of one km, the operation had to be suspended. The hypothesis is that this was due to local conditions, which turned out to be unsuitable for testing powerful weapons.

Having inspected the test site that is no more, the commission concluded that the background radiation in the locality was entirely safe. A higher level of radiation was recorded only in the vicinity of the casing of one of the shafts. It will soon be safely buried.

Certainly, the local commission failed to find answers to many of the questions that concern the population. In view of this, the Mangistau Oblast Soviet Executive Committee sent a note to the USSR Ministry of Atomic Power Engineering and Industry and the USSR Defense Ministry demanding the whole truth about the secret test site and the implementation of a range of extensive and meticulous checks at it.

Kirghiz Supreme Soviet Session Suspended

LD2401144191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1300 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Without having completed the formation of Kyrgyzstan's [Kirghizia] new Council of Ministers, the republican Supreme Soviet session was suspended today. This decision is connected with the publication of the presidential decree [on exchange banknotes]. As many deputies are leaders of oblasts and rayons or head large industrial enterprises and state and collective farms, it was deemed expedient that they should be at their workplaces at this time. The session will resume on 28 January.

Kirghiz Legislature Urges Solution in Lithuania

LD1801141591 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1000 GMT 18 Jan 91

[Text] The Presidium of Kirghizia's Supreme Soviet today issued a statement on the events in Lithuania. It notes that everything that has taken place in Vilnius is fraught with tragic consequences in other regions of the country and has a negative effect on the process of democratization and the establishment of a law-governed state. The Presidium of the republic's Supreme Soviet called on the opposing sides in Lithuania to resolve all the problems that have arisen only by political methods, on the basis of dialogue, mutual understanding, and respect.

Kirghiz Deputies View Personnel, New Departments

LD2301183491 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Report by correspondent V. Fedorov]

[Text] At the beginning of the Kirghizia Supreme Soviet session, the deputies observed a moment of silence to express their feelings of grief for those who died in the Baltic republics.

First on the session's agenda was the question of the formation of a Cabinet of Ministers, which was instituted instead of the Council of Ministers of the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic. A number of departments have been abolished, and several have been merged.

New departments have also emerged, including committees for the management of state property [komitet po upravleniyu gosudarstvennym imushchestvom], and for external ties [komitet po vneshnim svyazyam], a state contract committee [gosudarstvennyy kontraktnyy komitet], a state commission for youth affairs [gosudarstvennaya komissiya po delam molodezhi], and a Ministry of Tourism [ministerstvo turizma].

Also introduced were the posts of secretaries of state [gosudarstvennyye sekretari] who will supervise a range of adjoining sectors.

Kirghiz President Aksar Adayev tabled proposals about the personal composition of his team. German Kuznetsov, cochairman of the Democratic Renewal and Civil Concord group of deputies [deputatskaya gruppa Demokraticheskoye obnovleniye i Grazhhdanskoye soglasiye], was confirmed in the post of vice president. His predecessor in the post, Nasirdin Isanov, becomes prime minister. (Apas Dzhumagulov), the former head of the cabinet, will head the organizational committee for the creation of a Chu Oblast [Chuyskaya Oblast]. The composition of the members of the government underwent substantial changes.

[Begin Kirghizia Prime Minister N.I. Isanov recording] Economic questions are primarily the cause of many crises. We intend to begin our first steps with precisely that issue—the stabilization of the economy—and, on the whole, the stabilization of the political situation in the republic. The Cabinet of Ministers is a lever from the president for managing the national economic complex. Along with this, the Cabinet of Ministers, unlike the former Council of Ministers, is having its executive role enhanced. [end recording]

Kirghiz President Appoints Osh Soviet Chairman

LD1601084391 Frunze Domestic Service in Kirghiz 1300 GMT 14 Jan 91

[Text] By decree of the president of the Kirghiz Republic, Comrade Sydykov Batyrally was appointed chairman of the Osh Oblast Soviet of the Kirghiz Republic.

Dushanbe Gorkom Backs Lithuania Communists

PM2201155791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 19 Jan 91 First Edition p 2

[Report by correspondent L. Makhkamov: "Dushanbe: Appeal for Concord"]

[Text] Dushanbe—Just one question was submitted for examination at an extraordinary plenum of Dushanbe Tajik Communist Party Gorkom [city committee]: Its participants were faced with expressing their opinion on the appointment of Gorkom First Secretary D. Karimov as deputy chairman of the Tajik SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Cabinet of Ministers. But hardly had the Communists voted in support of the republic president's decree and sent the now former gorkom first secretary on his way with their good wishes than A. Vysochin, secretary of the Zheleznodorozhnyy Rayon Party Committee, asked to speak.

"A session of the Tajik Civil Aviation Administration's party committee has just ended," he said. "Communists voiced readiness to give the Lithuanian Communist Party not just moral but also material assistance."

The plenum participants adopted an appeal to Lithuania's Communists, voicing satisfaction with the restraint and courage of the Communist Party members who are defending the civil rights and the human dignity of all the people who live in the republic, regardless of nationality and social position. The plenum participants called for new bloodshed to be prevented and for the patient search for peaceful solutions to dangerously explosive problems to be continued.

V. Khodzhiyev, who recently was working on the CPSU Central Committee apparatus, was elected first secretary of Dushanbe Tajik Communist Party Gorkom.

K. Makhkamov, president of the Tajik SSR, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, and first secretary of the republic Communist Party Central Committee, participated in the plenum's work.

Dushanbe Party Committee Plenum Makes Changes

LD2101232691 Dushanbe Domestic Service in Tajik 0005 GMT 19 Jan 91

[Excerpt] The plenum of the party committee of the city of Dushanbe was held yesterday. Organizational questions were examined at the plenum. Dzhamshed Kh. Karimov was released from his duties as first secretary and member of the bureau of the party committee of the city in connection with his appointment as deputy chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic. Khodzhiyev, who previously worked in the apparatus of the Central Committee of the CPSU, was elected first secretary and member of the bureau of the party committee of Dushanbe. [passage omitted]

Turkmenia To Improve Draft, Military Service

PM2301110991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Jan 91 First Edition p 5

[Report by correspondent Captain A. Veklich under the "Direct Line" rubric: "On Service by Fellow Countrymen"]

[Text] Ashkhabad, 15 Jan—A resolution on measures to improve the draft and the performance of military service by young people from the republic was adopted at the routine session of the Turkmen SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet that has just completed its work.

Major General V. Kolesnik, Turkmen SSR people's deputy and military commissar of the republic, reported that the legislature supported the proposal of the Turkmen SSR Military Commissariat on the expediency of introducing an additional post of Turkmen SSR deputy minister of health and allocating oblast health care administrations one manpower unit each to organize work on improving the health of conscripts. These specialists will be included on the staff of draft commissions with the aim of making the medical selection tougher.

According to the resolution, military construction detachments and units of the Internal Troops deployed on the territory of Turkmenia will acquire their manpower from the republic's draft contingent.

Resources are being allocated from the republic budget to improve the material base of military commissariats, assembly points, and draft boards in Turkmenia.

Uzbekistan's Karakalpak Obkom Renamed

PM2201124791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 19 Jan 91 Second Edition p 3

[TASS report: "Plenum Held"]

[Text] Nukus, 18 Jan—A Karakalpak Uzbek Communist Party Obkom [Oblast Committee] plenum held here today decided to rename the oblast party organization the Karakalpak Republic Party Organization, and the obkom—the republic committee of the Uzbek Communist Party.

The plenum examined an organizational question. S.D. Niyetullayev was released from his duties as obkom first secretary in connection with his confirmation as head of the Uzbek Communist Party Central Committee Interethnic Relations Department. D.N. Shamshetov, who had been working as an obkom secretary, was elected first secretary of Karakalpak Republic Party Committee.